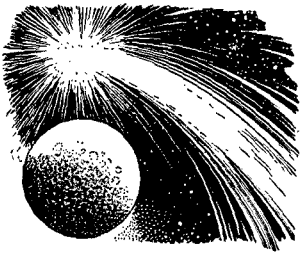
CALLIE COLLECTION
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO GET YOUR COPY OF **FANTASTIC UNIVERSE** EACH MONTH?

FANTASTIC UNIVERSE gives you the most thrilling collection of fantasy and science fiction ever made available in a SINGLE MAGAZINE.

In each issue of **FANTASTIC UNIVERSE,** you meet internationally famous writers whose published novels would cost you from $2.75 to $3.95 each.

You can look forward to stirring complete novels of intrigue or action on far-off planets, PLUS exciting stories, by outstanding authors such as Fredric Brown, Isaac Asimov, L. Sprague de Camp, Kenneth Bulmer, William Tenn, Judith Merril, H. Beam Piper, Harry Harrison, Nelson Bond, and many others, PLUS authoritative articles on Ufology by Research Section of Civilian Saucer Intelligence of New York, and others.

We should like very much to add your name to the list of the many thousands of subscribers from New York to Sydney, from Paris to the ports of Mars who in recent years have become **FANTASTIC UNIVERSE** avowed partisans.

If you are having trouble finding **FANTASTIC UNIVERSE** on your newsstand, and you want to be sure of getting us regularly . . . just clip the coupon below and mail it to us—with your check or money order—and **FANTASTIC UNIVERSE** will arrive on time each month.

KING-SIZE PUBLICATIONS, Inc.
320 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, New York

Kindly enter my subscription to **FANTASTIC UNIVERSE** for

One year (12 issues) at $3.75 Two years (24 issues) at $7.00

Additional postage: Canada 50¢, Foreign $1.00.

Please remit by check or money order.

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY, ZONE, STATE_____

PLEASE PRINT FU 85

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

These great minds were Rosicrucians . . .

WHAT SECRET POWER DID THEY POSSESS?

Benjamin Franklin

Isaac Newton

Francis Bacon

Why were these men great?

How does anyone — man or woman — achieve greatness? Is it not by mastery of the powers within ourselves?

Know the mysterious world within you! Attune yourself to the wisdom of the ages! Grasp the inner power of your mind! Learn the secrets of a full and peaceful life!

Benjamin Franklin, statesman and inventor... Isaac Newton, discoverer of the Law of Gravitation . . . Francis Bacon, philosopher and scientist . . . like many other learned and great men and women . . . were Rosicrucians. The Rosicrucians (NOT a religious organization) have been in existence for centuries. Today, headquarters of the Rosicrucians send over seven million pieces of mail annually to all parts of the world.

The ROSICRUCIANS

San Jose (AMORC) California, U.S.A.

THIS BOOK FREE!

Write for your FREE copy of "The Mastery of Life" — TODAY. No obligation. A non-profit organization. Address: Scribe R. E. M.

SEND THIS COUPON

Scribe R. E. M.
The ROSICRUCIANS
(AMORC)
San Jose, California, U.S.A.

Please send me the *free* book, *The Mastery of Life*, which explains how I may learn to use my faculties and powers of mind.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FANTASTIC UNIVERSE

MAY 1958
Vol. 9, No. 5

Needed—Space Intelligence 4
by *Lester del Rey*

Sit by the Fire 16
by *Myrle Benedict*

We'll Never Catch Them 23
by *Ivan T. Sanderson*

Field Report 33
by *Roger Dee*

Colon the Conqueror 36
by *John Boardman*

Face of Evil 44
by *Vincent S. Larkin*

Bait for the Tiger 62
by *Lee Chaytor*

Shapes in the Sky 109
by *Civilian Saucer Intelligence*

Little Green Men 121
by *John Nicholson*

The Beautiful Things 125
by *Arthur Zirul*

H. L. Herbert
Publisher

Hans Stefan Santesson
Editorial Director

Virgil Finlay
Cover Design

FANTASTIC UNIVERSE, Vol. 9, No. 5. Published monthly by KING-SIZE PUBLICATIONS, INC., 320 Fifth Ave., N. Y. 1, N. Y. Subscription 12 issues $3.75, single copies 35¢. Foreign postage extra. Reentered as second-class matter at the post office, New York, N. Y. The characters in this magazine are entirely fictitious and have no relation to any persons living or dead. Copyright, 1958, by KING-SIZE PUBLICATIONS, INC. All rights reserved. May, 1958. Printed in U. S. A.

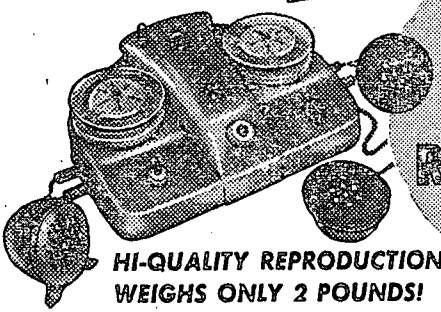
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Never Before Available at this LOW PRICE!

PRECISION

PORTABLE

BATTERY OPERATED



Transistor TAPE RECORDER

HI-QUALITY REPRODUCTION!

WEIGHS ONLY 2 POUNDS!

$29.95

plus $1.25 pp. & Hdlg.

PRECISION ENGINEERED — This amazing new, battery operated, portable, fully transistorized tape recorder, imported from West Germany, is precision engineered to render the same functions as machines costing five times as much.

FOR HOME, STUDENTS, BUSINESS — It will be the center of attraction at home for recording family get-togethers, capturing the magic of speech and song of family and friends — records radio, record and TV shows! Educators, too, agree that students, thru college level, benefit greatly from studying with a tape recorder. Business men can pack it in brief case or bag and take it along on trips to record letters, speeches, instructions, ideas; faithfully records verbal agreements, discussions. Perfect for recording interviews!

PENNIES TO OPERATE — The ingenious Tel-Tape records, plays back and erases — even has variable speed controls! Operates on 4 ordinary C-batteries available at any store for pennies. A simple press of a button and you're ready to record. It's so simple, even a child of five can operate it!

UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED — A wonderful gift for all — for home, school or business. Unconditionally guaranteed for 90 days against mechanical defects.

Comes complete with sensitive microphone, head-set and tape — $29.95 plus $1.25 pp. & hdlg.

AVAILABLE ACCESSORIES

PATCHCORD—Plug in attachment for playback thru radio, TV or phonograph $2.00

STETHO HEAD-SET—Like a doctor's stethoscope. Lightweight. Leaves hands free for typing, etc. $6.95

REEL OF TAPE (225 ft.) $1.25

BATTERIES—Set of 4 ..... 80c

Send Check or Money Order. If COD, fees extra.
10 DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

FILNOR PRODUCTS, INC.

Dept. HS-1, 101 West 31st Street, New York 1, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

needed—space intelligence

by . . . Lester del Rey

A discussion of the need for more understanding in Today's race for Space—and what can now be done.

ENGLISH is a remarkably flexible language and seems to be growing more so. Our success in launching *Satellite 1958 Alpha—The Explorer*—after this article was originally written, does not alter the fact that in the coming space age words familiar to us will come to have different meanings.

Let's take a group of grim-faced men in holiday mood at a bar during the past Christmas rush. The television is shouting news and a store outside is blaring carols and commercials, until the confusion blends into the spirit of the times: *Good spending, harried gentlemen—buy all that's on display—though Sputniks two, not Vanguard One—arise on Christmas day.* The bored bartender poses a question: "So what's from all this space stuff?"

"More intelligence," an engineer says. Intelligence—symbol for information—is already being telemetered down. And maybe now the blind sheep will begin to give science and engineering the respect due and overdue.

"More intelligence," a science-fiction reader agrees. It's about time people adopted the intelligent—symbol for superior—attitude of looking

Lester del Rey, continuing his series of articles on the Earth Satellite situation, turns to another aspect of the problems facing the Free World. Del Rey is the author of the recent ROCKETS THROUGH SPACE, *(Winston, $3.95) and of the just published* ROBOTS AND CHANGELINGS *(Ballantine Books, 35¢).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the future instead of the past. Maybe they might even stop demanding such silly proof for flying saucers.

A teacher stops pondering whether to recommend 18 or 19 of the 37 in his class for Remedial Reading, then nods in quick assent. It's time the people developed the intelligence—symbol for unquestioning acceptance of authority—to pay teachers more, build better plants, and put aside all that Rudolph Flesch stuff and go along with modern ideas. Still, with all this frantic emphasis on teaching so much science . . .

"More intelligence," a retired Army officer pontificates. Should have had more Intelligence—symbol for spies—years ago. Might even have prevented all this missile nonsense if Intelligence had been on the job when we first took Germany.

A Government man, grade P-3, nods along with the others. The Department's working on Intelligence—symbol for propaganda to the press—now, and more Intelligence symbol for security and counterspying—to stop the leaks that let *them* steal all our secrets before we can get them into practice. Have to screen scientists better; never can trust them to show intelligence—symbol for loyalty and silence. Though with the Armed Services spilling everything for publicity and bigger appropriations, how much good it would do . . .

Today, everyone is demanding more intelligence for the space age, and nobody means more than the grinding of old axes—many of them stone axes, some paleolithic.

Let's define the word a little closer, and see where that gets us. To a psychologist, intelligence is the ability to learn (not just to memorize, but to appraise, or to form new responses to fit new stimuli, as well as to add facts to one's storehouse.) Since most other honest uses of the word derive from this meaning of ability to learn, this seems to be the best working definition of intelligence.

That definition makes the need for more intelligence in the race for space no less pressing. We must obviously have more intelligence about space and the means of getting into space than we have yet developed. We must have more intelligence about ourselves and the rest of the world if we are to survive as a civilization long enough to make use of space. And we must have more intelligence about science or the laws of the universe if we are to gain anything from space. And so on, and on.

Are we going to gain this needed increase in intelligence?

It now seems fairly certain that, in any reasonable length of time, we are not! In fact, it is quite probable that our intelligence as a nation is going to be sharply curtailed. Some service will be rendered to our ability and opportunity to learn and to dissemination of information. But in the conflict between the meaning of intelligence and the various meanings of Intelligence, we'll probably

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

find ourselves losing ground for some time.

There are, after all, two factors to the ability to learn. One is an inherent or cultivated ability on the part of the person doing the learning. The other is a body of facts or responses to be learned. All the information in the world won't do much good to the true moron, because he can't assimilate it. Nor will a super-genius be able to learn much when all information is denied him, since there is nothing to assimilate.

To begin at the beginning, we can't do much about the matter of inherent intelligence. Short of eugenics (shh!), there is almost no way to raise the intelligence level of mankind appreciably; and even the most drastic application of eugenics would require hundreds of years to have any great effect. Computers serve in one sense to increase our *rate* of learning. But they show a lamentable lack of discretion; rather than supplying an increase in intelligence, they demand it for proper functioning and programming.

All right, we can't breed intelligence and we can't build it. But how about cultivating it, through education? Theoretically, this is a good possibility. We know now that a man's I.Q. (which has at least a close correlation to intelligence) can be increased somewhat by education, just as other abilities increase through practice. Also, in having more data upon which to operate, people should do better in using their native intelligence. Judgment may not be precisely an aspect of intelligence, but it is related, and we find that it tends to grow surer with an increase of knowledge. In these times, we can use that, too.

Education is the obvious answer, and one that has been very much in the news. We've suddenly learned—as we had the ability to do ten years ago, had we chosen to come out of our shell—that Russian education has been stepped up until in some ways it seems to be better than ours. Russian youth is flocking into science and engineering courses, and Russian youth is also being given heavy doses of languages, humanities, and general education, though this aspect is often played down in an attempt to justify ourselves as having "broad" rather than overly-specialized education. Well, behold what education has done for them! Let's all jump on the bandwagon and show them we can do it, too.

How are we going to do this? Simple. We'll have more classes in science, we'll start it a little earlier in school, and we'll spend more money. A lot more money. Maybe a hundred million dollars. (Don't stop to figure out how much this comes to per student. It takes several hundred millions to add an average of $10 per student per year.) And we'll all talk about it.

Will all this new emphasis on education amount to anything? It may—though not without a lot more thought and intelligence(!) than we have yet been able to bring to the problem. On the purely physical

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

level, we're faced with a monumental task if we're to equal—let alone surpass—the Russian system. According to the best figures I can find, Russia is averaging about 17 students to a class; we are running to about twice that number. Where are we going to get all the new teachers and school rooms to equal that?

This is no new problem. For years, parents have watched their own children being crowded into more and more inadequate facilities, taught by harried and overworked teachers. We've been bombarded by campaigns for more schools and teachers. And we've been steadily losing ground. Everyone knows teachers can't operate in overcrowded schools at even half efficiency, but we haven't found it practical to do anything effective about it. Local taxes simply can't be raised to meet the demands. (Sure. In a few cases, we have luxury plants where there are rest rooms for teachers, and ostentatious displays of what physical buildings can become. These we point to with pride. But in most cases, there aren't adequate basic rooms and toilets.)

Is Sputnik suddenly going to make the public shell out in local areas to build the schools they can't build under pressure from the plight of the kids? Is it going to force up teachers' salaries to the level their ability and training should merit? Of course not.

There is talk of national help to the schools. There is always such talk, but now it has been increased. But this will be only a drop in the bucket, even if the pressures of different areas, local prejudices, special interests, and other things don't ruin such a bill.

Congress is going to be faced with the demand for the greatest military budget of all in an effort to provide defense that will somehow make us feel that we aren't in danger of immediate destruction. (I won't discuss here whether it has any other real value.) And Congress is going to okay such a budget—the pressure is so great that it has to. But at the same time, there is a tremendous pressure for economy. To most of us, taxes have reached a level where they cannot be raised any higher.

To keep within a total budget that will be accepted, and at the same time to grant the minimum military appropriations that cannot be refused, there must be a tremendous effort to pare away other expenses. In such a climate, the idea that a budget for education equal to the job of providing adequate schooling can be passed is unthinkable. If we assume that there are only 50% more school facilities needed than we have, and that only fifteen million children are in school—both sadly underrated figures—we're licked. Allow a bare hundred dollars a year per student for teachers, another hundred for buildings, and you have already come to more than a billion dollars as the minimum. Now if you allow for necessary other expenses, you'll double that.

If you want to be realistic about

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the figures and to provide for really adequate facilities and teaching, you'll need at least fifteen billion dollars. (Don't leave out the local inefficiency, the cost of rush jobs instead of steady growth, etc., or you're not realistic.) Yet I know few people so optimistic as to hope that even half a billion will be spent.

This is, after all, a democracy. Our legislators give us what we demand or what special pressure groups convince them we demand—not necessarily what is good for us. (In non-democratic governments, the people get what the ruling group demands, and again not what they necessarily need!) Russia can decide to have whatever school budget she wants because a few men are convinced; we can do it only after we have educated most of the population to the ensuing sacrifices.

But suppose the miracle was passed, and local and national governments raised the money? Yeah, and so what? Money grows, but it doesn't grow schools overnight, and teachers come not from der vood-vork oudt by themselves. There would still be a lag of several years (and probably several million added to the crop of children) before the plants could be built. There would still be time required before we could expand the plants to teach the teachers to teach the teachers.

Again, pass a miracle. We've suddenly got the schools, all well staffed with teachers of the highest calibre, and whatever system they use is as much better than Russia's as some "modern" educators feel it can be. Does this provide us with a corps of intelligent young people to meet the challenge from abroad successfully?

Obviously, it does not. Even if we can forget about the elementary schools—where the real beginning of education lies—we still have to wait a decade before we can make any appreciable change. The boy we start on the road to becoming a scientist in 1958 will do well indeed to make any real contribution before 1960.

Of course, there is one other way which might get us an elite intelligence corps by 1960. At present, our system is based on the idea of giving the average student an average education and trying to give even the sub-normal ones the maximum possible. Under this system, the above-normal cannot receive the maximum attention, which must be reserved for those who need it most. But this isn't the only possible way. We could use a screening system, concentrate on the upper 25%—who are the ones who will make the contributions, anyhow, usually. This system is used in much of the world to some extent. (We do screen out the poorest students before college, but by then the damage has been done.)

We could—but we won't. The fiction necessary to democracy that every man is created equal (meant only to apply in law) has been perverted to mean that every child must have equal treatment. If the mother

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Joe Dumbquat—whose psyche will be permanently warped anyhow by having a forced education he can't take—finds he isn't getting as much chance as Bill Breitschein, a potential genius, she'll complain, and the schoolboard will back her up; so will Bill's mother!

Besides, no matter what we do with the school system, we can't hope to come up with any sudden flood of school children who decide to become scientists or learned men. We've had ourselves a ball for quite a while (the anti-intellectual tradition goes back to Colonial times) with jokes and laughter at anyone who dares to think beyond the severely practical of the moment. A test of reactions among high-school students recently showed that teachers aren't rated very high, but scientists and "professors"—any learned men to most people—are considered to be absent-minded, impractical, threadbare, seedy, fuzzy-minded dreamers, mildly amusing and contemptible. They laugh good, like ridicule should. Our heroes are to be found among men of action and men of ostentatious financial achievement. (This is a phenomenon we take as universal—but falsely so. In many countries—specially Europe—the intellectual and the learned men are regarded with extreme respect by the masses.) With that attitude, why should a youngster want to try for such a role in life?

It seems that we have to improve the intelligence or education of the people at large before we can do much about educating our children.

Well, why not do that? We have some of the most extensive media of mass communication in the world. Our press covers our nation and we can know the outlines of the latest change in fashion or cars, the latest million dollar record, or the latest axe-murder from coast to coast in minutes. We have reporters covering the globe. We have radios with hourly news reports. We have television, to make even the most difficult idea seem simple by visual and oral presentation. No nation outranks us in number of TV sets per capita. We spend immense amounts on movies, proven in wartime to be an excellent way of presenting facts. And behind it all, we have an advertising set-up which has concentrated incredible sums into finding how to influence the public. (Though it is interesting to note that sales dropped off late in 1957 after the greatest expenditure for advertising of any year.)

We could surely spread out all the information needed to the public. We again have the example of Russia to show us it can be done. There the government has deliberately fostered magazines of science and mechanics—similar to some we have, but specifically designed to arouse an interest and appreciation of science. The science-fiction magazines are encouraged today—filled with old-style technological stories full of a sense of wonder about science, however poor their fictional qualities. A concerted drive is being put on to sell

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

science and progress, even at the expense of consumer goods.

But again, this is being done by directive from the top down, and we don't work that way. Instead of being the best possible source of information for the layman and potential student, our press and other facilities are among the worst in the world.

Sputnik offered a fine chance to see evidence of this, incidentally. The editor of this magazine is literate in several languages, and subscribes to publications from abroad. I can at least struggle my way through most European languages, so I welcomed a chance to look over some magazines in his office, recently, I'd already read almost everything on Sputnik published here—I have to, since I have been writing about it. But when I picked up French or Swedish publications, it was shocking to see how much had been omitted by our press. For the first time, cogent details were presented. They obviously were available, but simply hadn't been published here. Also, the level of technical information was better than that found here in the technical magazines.

This isn't surprising. First, remember the anti-intellectual tradition bequeathed us by our ancestors (relatively uneducated men, whose idea of education often stopped at the ability to read the Bible—men who had to value the practical and physical things that permitted them to survive), and which makes us laugh at the idea of a brain-trust or the absent-minded professor. Remember that even in the pro-science early s-f magazines, scientists were mad more often than any other type. Remember that we've been conditioned for years to buy our cars without a list of engineering specifications. (You should see the circular on the Swedish Volvo and then compare it with our throwaways!)

Then remember that we shape our entertainment and information media from the bottom up. Newspapers, magazines, radio and television all make their money through their advertising. (There are a few, like this magazine, which don't—which is why this appears here—but they're in the minority.) They necessarily must print what the reader expects in order to increase their circulation or rating to justify the advertising price. On the whole, many do try to give just a little more serious attention to events than the audience demands, but only slightly.

Incidentally, if all this sounds like a diatribe against democracy, let me say that I'm *quite* aware of the advantages of a system which permits me to make such a diatribe. I'm *also* aware that this is one area where privileges and advantages should be paid for with special responsibilities, and if those responsibilities aren't met, we're in for trouble. So far, we haven't begun to meet them. If there is a fault, then it lies with the people rather than the principles involved, since democracy is both the most rewarding and the most demanding of all forms of government. I should

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

consider myself totally lacking in my response to responsibility if I tried to gloss over facts and possibilities.

Effectively, we seem to be defeated in our need for greater intelligence and mass education until we can achieve that very thing enough to demand it!

And even if we were to demand it from our papers and radio, the unhappy fact is that we couldn't entirely get it! Even in the serious, learned journals of science and technology, I miss whole areas where I am deeply concerned—as a citizen and as a man trying to keep up with the expanding possibilities for knowledge. The facts are not available.

This, of course, brings us to the problem of Intelligence as it is often used in government circles—meaning limited information or meaning spying and counterspying.

Here we have the use of the word Intelligence to prevent the free application of intelligence. We have the use of the word Security to prevent what may be our only security, since our only eventual safety may come from the full application of intelligence.

We cannot—any of us—know what is going on in the world or in the field of science to a full extent. Even the man who is given access to some secrets is denied others. This may be necessary—it often is. I cannot and will not go overboard in any idea of dropping all caution. But we must recognize the fact that it has a number of built-in dangers, and that some of these dangers have already born fruit—or Sputniks—and will continue to do so.

I covered some of these dangers in a book I wrote in 1950 (*It's Your Atomic Age,* 1951, Abelard), and see no reason not to quote a part here.

"The secrecy curtain which has been applied to science . . . has kept the people from gaining much of the information which would enable them to think with full clarity on matters of both national and world politics. Because of it, there was a false feeling that somehow we had some tremendous secret, and that no other country would ever have the bomb. Any scientist in the field could have explained that getting the bomb was only a matter of time, money and effort, with time being the major factor; but much of the information which would have proved this was not released. . . .

"Again, science is handicapped by this lack of full and free flow of information. A man working with a betatron may turn up some information on the behavior of the meson which sheds further light on work being done elsewhere with the pile. It may be years before such facts become correlated. And yet this correlation may be the thing which would lead to a simpler and quicker solution . . . in still another field. Sciences are interlocked in many ways, and to cut off any information may produce strangely lopsided developments. . . .

"Normally, before the war, science was truly international. . . .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Now of course, a screen of secrecy has to be imposed. But this means that we cannot be sure of what is being done elsewhere. . . . Some group of scientists in another country might locate a key fact that would unlock a whole new body of science, and we would then be left out in the cold.

"As time goes on, the body of scientific knowledge in each country will become more and more isolated. Interests will shift and some will go off in one direction, while others pursue different courses.

"In this way, we could reach a stage where we would be literally unprepared for war, because we could never know what the other country had. And in such a case, some surprise attack might catch us with something of which we know absolutely nothing.

"Normally, of course, strictly military secrets are withheld; but when the general body of science is shared, these merely represent percentages of development, rather than widely different approaches. We can still get some information about each other through various methods of spying, and we undoubtedly do keep some check through that means. But if that method is effective, then the secrecy is of no value—since other countries will also have clever spies. . . .

"All in all, the costs of secrecy are high.

"Yet not even the most individualistic scientist would say that Security was not necessary. There definitely *do* have to be controls. In a world which can blow a good portion of its population off the map, and in which foreign relations are such a tangled web, only an utter fool could deny that precautions well beyond normal must be taken. . . . But certainly there is no easy solution, and our progress will be marked by repeated quiverings and warnings of shifting stresses and strains that leave none of us comfortable."

I still feel pretty much the same as I expected then to feel now, though the time for the strains to appear was shorter than I thought it would be.

Security has existed for some time. Most of us have little idea of how strongly and widely it is intrenched. And nowadays, few people bother to think of it. Yet the appearance of Sputnik with almost no warning —in place of the constant progress reports of former days—was an example of Security. There were warnings—and there was much more knowledge in some official circles than was released to the public about Russia's work on rockets. But when the first spaceship crossed the sky, most of the people here were totally unprepared and the aftereffects were almost hysterical.

Security has definite values. Within limits, it must be kept. But we should never forget while demanding more intelligence to get us successfully into the age of space that security procedures are and must be anti-intelligence devices.

One of the greatest dangers is that such devices will be misused, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that they will be used more and more where they serve no purpose. This is an inevitable tendency.

Sometimes this exaggerated use is funny. A magazine with one of my stories was graded as too "Secret" for some people working at a pioneer atomic plant to read; yet at the same time, that magazine was on sale at a stand just outside the plant. This is amusing—particularly when the story had no military value and was based on a theory of atomic structure having no relation to any we know or are interested in.

But it isn't funny when the same stamp of secrecy is put upon a paper which will reveal that we are failing at some piece of science. Yet precisely such a use can be made and has been made of Security. It isn't funny when news of the progress in some field by a foreign country is kept from us because it will prove embarrassing to some department head or agency. Yet, in all fairness, if you were holding such a job and release of the paper might make for difficulties, would you release it?

It becomes extremely serious when our scientists are kept from vital information—when our schools cannot teach the latest facts and theories, but must operate on outmoded ideas; unfortunately, one of the best times for developing new ideas is while studying a subject, and if the study is inadequate or based on false facts, the creative force may be channelled into totally useless byways.

Curiously, security has a habit of increasing as the need for it decreases. Thus when any country is supreme in a field, the security measures serve at least to prevent others from catching up by piracy of knowledge. (That they may also prevent us from extending our lead is an inherent risk in such devices.) But in a field where we are losing or have lost the lead to another, they can only protect a vacuum of knowledge, and serve no real purpose. Yet in such a case, the tendency is to impose even heavier veils of secrecy to prevent the knowledge that we have lost the lead from spreading—to protect the custodians from being faced with blame for loss of the custody. This is more dangerous than any risk from leaks while we lead, because it serves to hide the need of the effort and sacrifices that might enable us to regain or capture such a lead again.

Of course, we can always try to learn through Intelligence what our intelligence has failed to reveal, but so far this seems to have born little fruit.

However, some of the reasons for our being unable to obtain all the facts is not due to any deliberate effort on anyone's part. It is a product of the very advance of science and technology, of the complexities of politics and propaganda. Even if there were no Security and no lack of all the facts in the press, it would be almost impossible for any one man to get a true picture of what goes on.

It is no longer possible for an intelligent layman to read the reports of science and glean enough for general understanding. The fields of sci-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ence are too many and too specialized for any single person to learn to understand all of them even partially. Often, in fact, a chemist in one field may find the work done in another field of chemistry almost incomprehensible. I was recently reminded that Einstein never could accept the principle of uncertainty developed by Heisenberg!

And politics now involves hundreds of nations, each with its own private drives and desires, each desperately striving to stay in the lead, catch up, or sustain its proud backwardness in the face of new and aggressive cultures. We know a little of America—very little of South America beyond misleading clichés —and some of Europe; at least we know something of the major European countries. But today there are new nations everywhere, and every continent is in foment, and of world-shattering importance. We don't even know the language of our closest allies, as a rule, much less those of others. Not more than 1% of our people can read Russian, though 40% of the students in Russia learn English. How can we hope to know what really motivates some action at the UN without knowing in full the body of literature, history, folklore and local political rivalries of the country involved?

The forces opposed to effective intelligence have never been greater, just as the need has never been even remotely as great. Now we have to add a whole new body of science and technology to our learning—we must master space beyond our world, long before we can hope to understand our own world. And we must learn to see the world as a whole, with distances and separations blurred into nothing by hurtling missiles that can circle it 15 times in a single day.

The demands for full use of more and more intelligence have been increasing steadily for a number of years. Now they have been magnified tenfold overnight. The impossibility of achieving any reasonable degree of fuller intelligence has also been increasingly obvious. This has been true for every science and for every political relationship.

Up to now, however, we have been able to muddle through by setting up what might be called a special Intelligence Corps for each field —men who could unite to steer us through each science, smaller groups who could somehow manage to untangle the relationships between us and any other country. For a time, this seemed to work, though we ran into trouble in atomics, where no solution has been found yet because it is so strongly related to both science and politics.

Now we have reached another plateau. Space has been opened up, and this involves the whole world as one unit, and then goes beyond. A satellite travels over hundreds of countries, and cannot be confined to one, or even to a few allied ones. It also is the product of an incredible number of sciences and technologies, some new to us. And finally, for a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

further difficulty, it finds us with the added burden of no time at all in which to operate, since we are behind. This is too unwieldy a subject to handle by the little groups we have developed before. The promise, the danger, the rewards and the responsibilities that are inherent in the space age cannot be limited.

We need space intelligence and a Space Intelligence Corps—not eventually, but now. And the only Space Intelligence Corps that can operate successfully must be made up of every one of us, not just a chosen few.

The first problem it must solve is the hardest—how to create itself!

OUR EXPLORER SATELLITE

As predicted in our editorials and in del Rey's previous article, we have ourselves begun to forge ahead in the "race for the Stars" with the launching, on Friday evening, January 31st, of **Satellite 1958 Alpha—The Explorer**, circling the earth (as we go to press) every 113 minutes at altitudes as high as 2,000 miles. Apart from the effect of the launching on our national morale, a further significance, as pointed out in an editorial in the Washington **Sunday Star** for February 2, 1958, is that the Explorer and later satellites—Russian as well as American—will "remind the whole of humanity that man has really begun to climb at least the first few lower steps of the stairway to the stars. He is no longer earthbound. In the years immediately ahead, he himself will ride vehicles into the far reaches of space, will send machines to the moon and bring them back, will build equipment—perhaps within the next five years—that will orbit him around the earth on a returnable basis. Fantasy? Not at all. We are rushing into an age, almost willy-nilly, in which the once fantastic is becoming about as real as an automobile or a TV set."

"This age," continued the **Sunday Star** editorial, "is the age of outer space. It is full of potentials compounded of both enormous good and enormous evil. The Sputniks and our Explorer are but the beginnings of a tremendously revolutionary area in which the human race will either learn to control the work of its genius or travel higgledy-piggledy toward total extinction. That is why the United States has proposed to the Soviet Union extraordinary international measures to insure that earth satellites and the greater fantasies yet to come can be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. If this is done, men will be able to reach for the stars with confidence. Otherwise the outlook for our world will be terrifying indeed."

What is of course immediately needed is education—education as to our responsibilities in an age of increasingly indefinable frontiers—and Intelligence, Space Intelligence, geared to these new problems and to these new responsibilities, problems and responsibilities which have developed in our time.

Editor.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sit by the fire

by . . . Myrle Benedict

FU O

Virgie had gotten over her wildness and shyness when she was around him, but she was still afraid of people.

'TWASN'T the fust time I'd seen her—the strange wild girl trampin' over the hills, but 'twas the fust time she'd come close enough so's I could actual see whut she looked like.

She didn't look mean, like the stories folks tole made her out to be. She looked kinda lost, and awful young, like. She was just a little bitty thing, too.

Now, I take that back about her lookin' lost. She didn't exactly. She looked more like somebody had done gone off an' left her, an' she was jest bound to make do as best she could.

She didn't run off when she seen me. She helt her ground an' stared at me, long an' hard, like 'twas her as owned the meader an' not me. She was right spunky, too. Didn't look like the sight of a ol' codger like me scairt her none.

Lookin' at her up close like that I could see she mighty close 'sembled my middle girl Virgie, her whut died when she warn't much older than this here girl.

I helt out my hand an' I spoke to her. I says, "Lookie here, girl, whut you doin' on my propitty?" Only I says it real gentle like.

When she seen me holdin' my hand out like that, she jumped a few

Myrle Benedict's more poetical friends say she looks like Ondine; others say Lillith. Not having met her we can only report that this extraordinarily sensitive Oklahoma writer works as a radio-TV writer for an ad agency, is described as tall and green-eyed, and is active in a local theater group.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

steps back, like she was scairt I was gonna throw somethin' at her.

"Now hold on, girl," I says. "I ain't gonna hurt ya none. Now whut's a pritty leetle thing like you a-doin' out in the open all the time? Ain't you 'fraid you'll get hurt, or maybe et up by a mountain-lion or somethin'?"

For the first time her face kinda softened, like she'd heard an' understood all I was sayin' only she didn't want to let on none.

"No," she says, so soft I could scarce hear her. "I ain't a-feared o' that."

Then, like it had just dawned on her she'd said a spoken word, she turned an' woulda scooted back into the brush if I hadn't said anythin'.

"Wait a minute," I says. "You don't have to run off. Not from me. Shecks, I'm jest a ol' man, livin' up here on the side o' the mountain, all alone. You don't have to be a-feared o' me."

She turned, an' kinda looked at me, like she didn't know whether to b'lieve me or not.

"Come on," I says. "Whyn't you an' me go down to my cabin an' talk? There's a mite o' corn pone and I got some ice-cole buttermilk back in th' spring-house. Won't hurt you none, by the looks o' you."

She opened her mouth an' then closed it again.

"I ain't tryin' to force you, girl," I says. "I'm a-goin' back, an' if'n you want to come, come, an' if'n you want to go without supper, do."

I turned around an' started back down the path to my little cabin. I'm a ol' man, an' all my children have gone off an' married. My ol' woman, she died some years back, an' I live up here all alone. I tend my field an' the garden patch, an' I'm a sight better off than a lot o' old men whut goes an' lives off'n their kids. Folks say I'm crotchety, but I ain't. I got a real nice life up here, an' I don't want no meddlin' busybody from down in the village messin' it up tryin' to "help." That Miz Perkins, in partic'lar. She's th' do-goodinist woman I ever seen. Thinks it's a cryin' shame my kids "neglect" their pa like they do. Well, I don't call it neglectin'. I raised 'em up to stand on their two hind legs an' look after themselves, an' I expect them to let me do th' same thing.

I got inside my cabin, an' left th' door open a little. It was nice an' cool, after the heat of Indian Summer. I went out to th' spring-house an' got th' pitcher o' cole buttermilk an' brung it back to th' house. I poured out two glasses full, an' set the pan o' corn pone on th' table. I didn't bother none to look an' see if'n th' wild girl follered me or not.

Pretty soon I heard a little rustlin' sound, like a mouse makes in a corn-crib, only a lot softer, an' then I heard her a-gulpin' that buttermilk like she was starved. I pushed the pitcher toward her a little, an' let her be. She'd drank down three glasses o' buttermilk afore she said anythin'.

"That was good," she says.

I figured she wasn't likely to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

break an' run at the moment, so I turned around an' looked at her. She was a-sittin' on the edge o' her chair, like she was a-measurin' the distance to th' door in case she had to run for it. She had a milk moustache on her, where she'd been too greedy with th' buttermilk, like a kid. She had on a darkish sort of dress an' it was all dirty an' tore from th' brambles. She didn't have on no shoes, an' I could tell she was used to wearin' shoes, 'cause her feet was little an' white an' looked soft, even though they was pretty dirty right now. She was kinda pale, an' had dark hair, all wild an' tumbled lookin'.

She saw me lookin' at her feet an' drew them up under her, like she was a-shamed.

"Whut's your name, chile?" I says. "Whut'r you doin' out roamin' the mountain? Ain't you got no folks?"

"N-No, I ain't," she says. "I ain't got nobody."

"Whut are you so scared about? I ain't gonna hurt you."

"You ain't for sure?" she asks like a kid.

"I ain't for sure. Now, how come you're actin' like a rabbit caught in a snare?"

"I—I don't like this place."

"Well, I don't blame you none, if'n all you've done lately is run away from ever'body, an' not let any of 'em get in hailin' distance."

"I know. But they was all so big . . . an' I was scared."

"Why ain't you so scared o' me?"

"I dunno. You don't seem like th' other folks I've seen. You ain't never yelled at me, nor flang a stone at me. You know when to let a body be."

"Who'd want to throw a stone at you?"

"Oh, one o' them kids from over on th' yonder side o' th' hill."

"Well, I ain't gonna let nobody harm you, neither. Fact is, you c'n stay right here, if'n you've a mind to. 'Tain't nobody here close 'cept me, an' I'm a ol' man, an' I wouldn't mind havin' a purty young thing like you to sorta liven up th' place."

She looked at me, suspicious-like. "Why?" she says.

"Oh, I dunno. Maybe it's cause you look like Virgie, a little. That's my middle girl. She died some years back, when she warn't much older 'n you. B'sides, you need some place to stay, don't you?"

"I reckon."

"Wull, that's settled, then. You c'n sleep up in the loft. I'll fix Virgie's ol' bed for you up there, an' you can have it all for yourself. Whut's your name, anyway, bein' as how you'll be livin' here?"

"I don't rightly have no proper name," she says real soft. "If'n you don't care, I'd 'preciate it if'n you'd just call me . . . Virgie."

So the strange wild girl come to live with me. Once she'd gentled down an' decided to stay, she was a real joy to have around. She fixed up some of th' ol' dresses she'd found in a trunk, an' I went down to th' gen'rl store an' bought her some bright stuff so's she could sew some

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dresses for herself. She fixed up that loft so bright an' purty, an' give the walls a fresh coat o' whitewash, an' even whitewashed th' walls in th' rest o' th' cabin. She put up green curtains at th' winders an' put a red-an'-white checkered cloth on the table. She even made me change m' overhauls twicet a week an' trim m' hair an' beard, too, an' made me wash m' hands b'fore I eat. She was a tol'ble cook, an' she got better as she went along.

We give out down at the store that she was a distant relation, with no parents, so she'd come to live with me. There was a few who knew in their hearts that she was th' wild girl, but they never knew for certain, 'cause we never told.

But even them as thought they knew, stopped their talk in time an' come to look on her as my actual kin. She even called me "Uncle Reb." That's m' name, Rebel. M' folks named me that 'cause I was borned whilest th' War was goin' on.

Warn't no surprise t' me, when spring come 'round again that some o' th' young whelps down in th' village decided to come a-courtin' Virgie.

Now, Virgie, she'd done got over all her wildness an' shyness when she was around me, but when them lazy louts started drapin' themselves over th' porch rail, it come right back.

She'd sit there, pleased in a female way with all th' attention, but scairt, too, o' them big lumberin' boys. An' one evenin', after 'Kiah Piersall had been there, she come in a-cryin'.

"Virgie, what's that big ox done to you?" I says.

"Oh, Uncle Reb, he ain't done nothin', exactly," she says. "Only he —he tr-tried to kiss me, an' he was so hot an' the flesh around his eyes was so swollen, an' I was afeared!" She set down in the chair I'd made her an' huddled up in a heap. "He says he wants t' marry me, an' Uncle Reb, I just caint! I caint!"

"Whut do you mean, you caint? Now it's a fact that these menfolks hereabouts ain't whut you'd 'xactly call prizes, but you're gonna have t' marry somebody, some o' these days, Virgie."

"Oh, no, I ain't," she says, lookin' up sudden. "I ain't gonna marry nobody!"

"Why sure you are, Virgie. I knowed that when I took you in. You cain't spend the rest o' your life lookin' after a ol' man. You gotta have a life o' your own, with a husbin' to look after you, an' kids, maybe. I ain't gonna be here always, an' you just cain't go through life without nobody. 'Tain't natural."

Her face went real white, an' I thought she was a-goin' t' swoon, but she didn't. There was two spots o' red in her cheeks, an' her voice shook a little. "Uncle Reb, I didn't know whut I was gettin' myself in to, when I come here, I don't like it much, but I'm here, an' there's not much I c'n do about it now. But I just want t' be left alone! That's why I come to live with you. You let me be. I thought you understood maybe, but you don't neither."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Don't understand whut?" I says, but she didn't 'pear to hear me.

"I c'n always go back an' roam th' hills. I c'n go far away, an' maybe find somebody else who'll take me in for a while, but I don't want to. I like it here, an' I like you, Uncle Reb. Only don't make me mix with other folks!"

"You don't seem to mind goin' down to th' store, or goin' t' meetin', or to th' barndance once in a while."

"That kinda mixin' isn't too bad, Uncle Reb. It's th' springtime mixin' I'm a-talkin' about—th' kind o' spring an' fall mixin' that's in th' blood."

I laughed. "Honey, if'n it's in your blood, it's not anythin' to be afeared of."

"But, Uncle Reb, you don't understand! It ain't in my blood . . . the folks I come from, they don't even remember it, 'xcept as it was writ down in books. But you folks, you got it so strong it likes to make a body faint from just bein' close to it!"

"Virgie, I don't understand what you're sayin', for a fact."

"Uncle Reb, listen to me. I'm not like folks around here. I'm not like anybody you ever met. I—I don't think it's quite proper for me t' mix too close with you folks. All I want is a roof over my head, an' good food, an' to be let alone!"

She meant it, I could tell. "Aw right, Virgie," I says. "I don't rightly understand why, but I'll go 'long with you, if'n that's whut you want."

"It is, Uncle Reb," she says, an' she lowered her eyes so's they caught the light for a minute an' shone out like two amber stones.

Springtime come an' went, an' when summer had come, th' young menfolk settled down a little. Virgie took t' going t' th' barndance once in a while again. But she quit it whenever th' autumn moon started shinin' big an' yeller along th' ridge o' th' hills.

When th' fust snow come, she really settled in for th' winter. Of an evenin', she'd sit by the fire, all skwoonched up with her eyes shut, for all th' world like th' ol' red cat whut come t' live with us.

Virgie hadn't been with me too long when a ol' red mamma-cat come trailin' by an' took up with her. I didn't care if'n Virgie kept it, 'cause it could keep down th' mice in th' house, so long as it didn't bring in too many kittens.

So anyhow, of an evenin' them two 'd curl up afore th' fire an' toast themselves an' th' cat 'd purr an' hold its head up for Virgie to pet it. She never give it no name, just called it Cat, but it seemed to know that's who she meant when she called it.

I think that's the time Virgie was happiest, when th' snow lay deep on th' ground, an' there was no call to go outdoors, nor no call for nobody else to, neither.

Come spring again, Virgie started to shed the good, healthy plump she'd built up in th' winter. Th' young men started comin' back, jest

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the same as last year, an' Virgie, she got as snappy as a ol' turtle.

"Uncle Reb, it's gettin' me, too," she says one day. "I c'n feel this spring-thing, almost like you-all can."

"Oh, hush your mouth," I says. "I'm gettin' just a little tired o' your complainin' 'cause the boys is after you. There's more'n one gal down to th' village whut would give a pretty to be in your shoes, let me tell you."

"I don't want th' boys after me!" she says, an' run off to hide.

I couldn't help snortin'. She was a silly little thing, not t' 'preciate that she had th' whole part o' th' young men at her heels. I couldn't see it, m'self. She was too little. Man lives in th' hills, needs a woman big an' strong 'nough to help 'im. But she did have a strange sort o' face, with th' big eyes an' little chin, an' with that cloudy dark hair an' the pretty way she had o' talkin', she didn't need to say more'n a dozen words b'fore th' boy she was a-talkin' to was plumb gone.

I didn't pay it too much mind when she didn't come home to supper. But she was gone all th' next day, too, an' didn't come in 'til 'way after dark. I could tell she'd been cryin'.

"You et supper?"

"No, Uncle Reb. I ain't hungry."

She looked at me, an' her eyes caught in th' candlelight, like they had a way o' doin'.

"Uncle Reb, whut would you say if'n I told you I wasn't one o' your folks?"

"Honey, I know that. You ain't any more kin to me than . . ."

"No, I mean, I ain't like nobody around here. Nobody a-tall."

"Virgie, are you startin' that again? I declare, chile, you got the funniest notions in your head o' anybody . ."

"Uncle Reb, I mean it. Set down here." She took th' candle an' lighted the gasoline lantern I don't hardly never use. She went over to th' chest an' got m' readin' glasses for me. "Here, put these on. I want you to see me good."

I put 'em on, an' she set down in front o' me. "Look close at m' eyes, Uncle Reb."

I looked at 'em, an' it was a minute afore it sunk in whut I was seein'. They wasn't like ordinary eyes, they wasn't. I still couldn't see 'em too plain, even with m' glasses, but I could see 'em well enough to see they was like that ol' red mammacat's eyes.

"Whut are you, Virgie?" I says.

"I'm a . . . visitor, Uncle Reb," she says. "Me an' some more like me. We come from somewheres a far off. Th' others, they wanted to come a lot more'n me, an' they talked me into it. I was feelin' awful fearful when you found me an' took me in."

"Where are th' others like you?"

"I dunno. We went all over. Most o' us is scattered through the hill countries, though, 'cause it's more dangerous for us in th' cities. Th' people there are more likely t' notice that we're diff'rent."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I reckon you're right. But how come th' folks 'round here ain't seen how you're so diff'rent? Seems like they c'd look at them eyes an' see right off."

"I got some little bitty pieces o' special-made glass I wear on m' eyes, whenever I got to go among people. They don't hurt none, when you get used to 'em, an' they make my eyes look like ever'body else's. I ain't wore 'em too much with you, 'cause your eyesight is awful poor anyhow. M' skin is diff'rent colored, too. I keep some dye rubbed in t' give it color. That is, I did. I don't need to very much anymore."

"Why not, Virgie?"

"Uncle Reb, th' longer I stay, th' more I get like th' folks here. I guess I ain't strong 'nough t' keep m'self like I was. If'n I stay out in th' sun long anymore, I get brown. I never did before. My skin don't look silvery no more, even without the dye. O' course, there's some things I can't change, like m' eyes, an' m' feet." She stuck her feet out, with no shoes. I couldn't see anythin' diff'rent, 'til she wiggled her toes, an' there wasn't but four of 'em.

"But, Uncle Reb, I catch m'self thinkin' strange thoughts, like you folks. An' in th' springtime . . ." She started cryin' an' hid her head in her skirt. She looked up again. "I ain't used to th' feelin'. With us, it's a quiet thing, but with you-all, it's like a rollin' wave that don't never quite go down but climbs higher all th' time."

I didn't say nothin'. I jest set quiet for a while, thinkin'. After a little, Virgie got up an' went to her room in th' loft. Pretty soon she come down, dressed in th' old ragged dress she had on when I found her.

"I reckon you'll want me t' go," she says real quiet.

"No such thing, I says. I been thinkin' long an' hard. You're a stranger, for sure, but you've lived under my roof an' you've eat my bread. I've come t' love you like one o' my own, an' you're welcome t' stay as long as you want."

She looked at me, an' those strange eyes o' hers lit up like candles. "Oh, Uncle Reb! Thank you so much!" She swooped over t' me an' give me a kiss on th' cheek, th' fust one I've had in years.

So Virgie stayed. As th' seasons o' the year passed, I c'd tell, little by little, she was losin' her strange ways.

I'm a-gettin' old, an' a little feeble, an' I worry 'bout Virgie sometimes, an' whut'll happen t' her when I'm gone. After she told me whut she did, I can't see that it would be good, crossin' her strain an' ours.

I jest hope she c'n maybe find one o' her own kind afore she gets so much like us he wouldn't be able t' tell who she was.

He'd better hurry. Last week I caught her kissin' 'Kiah Piersall, out in th' autumn moon. And this time, she warn't scairt.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

we'll never catch them

by . . . Ivan T. Sanderson

Are they extraterrestrial in origin, constructed here on earth, animate, or inanimate shapes in the sky, or what?

IN PREVIOUS articles in this series we have discussed the alleged forms of Ufos and four major possibilities as to their nature. It now behooves us to start enquiring into the behavior of Ufos with a view to ascertaining whether any evidence may be gleaned therefrom which might indicate the nature of the things. But before doing this, we must reiterate these four basic possibilities.

They were, first, that *some* Ufos could be machines constructed by human-beings on this earth, a possibility that becomes ever less likely to explain the past but ever more likely to confuse the future. Despite the very cogent arguments raised against the likelihood of any earth government maintaining continued secrecy about lenticular-shaped airplanes while boasting of sputniks and intercontinental missiles, there is still a possibility that they might have occasion to do so. However, there is no possibility that such devices could explain *all* Ufo sightings, for neither the Russians nor anybody else had any airplanes before this century, while balloons were rare, to say the least, before the previous century. (Of course, there is now the very pertinent

"If UFOs, as opposed to lumps of ice, bolides, tectites and other IFOs, are alive or controlled by life, they are probably activated by forces we do not yet understand, but which can get them out of anything, anywhere, any time," says Ivan Sanderson in the latest of his articles written specially for FU.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

question as to who so accurately mapped mountain ranges in Antarctica, Greenland, and Arctic Canada before they were covered with ice at least 5000 years ago, as demonstrated by the Piri Maps, and how they could have done so without the use of aerial machines: but this is another subject that will be discussed at another time.)

The second suggestion made was that some Ufos—and, it appeared, possibly a considerable proportion of them—could themselves be life-forms. That is to say, not animals, plants, or vast viruses, but a fourth form of life, indigenous to the upper atmosphere or to space itself, composed of a minimum of matter, and "feeding" exclusively on energy, as opposed to animals and viruses which feed solely on matter, or plants which feed half on matter and half on energy.

The third possibility suggested was that there could be parallel evolution throughout the whole or part of the Universe and that this may have resulted in intelligent beings having been developed in various environmental circumstances on other planetary systems, some of which have a greater or lesser head-start on us and have developed methods of interstellar travel in machines of various kinds. Some of these, in turn, might be from the third planets of stars of the same physical makeup as our own Sun, and, therefore, be singularly like us and able to breathe our air, hear our sounds, and even monitor our radio and television broadcasts.

The fourth idea was that quite a large part of the sightings reported by sensible people and especially those confirmed by radar might be natural but inanimate items drifting into our atmosphere from space but the nature of which we do not as yet know, suspect, or even admit. Anent this aspect of ufology, we pointed out that the physical make-up of our planet and its immediate environment is not yet fully comprehended either.

We are not yet done with "possibilities" by any means, and, once again, we continue to urge our Editor to find space for an extended list. Also, we would once again emphasize that, even if one of the above-mentioned four (or any number of the extended list of possibilities) should prove to be the explanation of any one or even several Ufos, it still does not mean that that is the *sole* explanation of *all* of them. Ufos are probably, not just possibly, as varied if not much more diverse in origin than, for instance, all the loose and independent objects that might be garnered from the whole Atlantic Ocean—ranging from amoeba and fish to pebbles and submarines. The Universe is a big place and is manifestly filled with a great number of different things.

Further, none of these ideas is put forward as an "explanation" of all Ufos. They are simply deductive exercises in logic, assuming

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that there are fairly large numbers of unidentified objects seen in our skies which, by their appearance and/or *behavior,* simply cannot be explained by our present knowledge and acceptance of the nature of things.

And, we would point a very bold finger at the word "behavior."

This, also, is a vast subject, as my co-workers in CSI have started to indicate in their concurrent factual series in *F.U.* Zoologists have found that, the more closely you study any animal the more you discover there is to find out about it, and the more complex its behavior is found to be. There are over a million distinct species of animals known from the surface of this, our own piffling little planet, and every one is different from every other in some manner of appearance and some aspect of behavior. There are probably *several million* different kinds of things that can in certain circumstances—our atmosphere for instance—be called Ufos, and doubtless each of them behaves in its own way. No wonder Airforce personnel and the public at large are confused and doubting; small wonder also that even scientists and many serious enquirers in the field of Ufology give up in disgust, for one and all are looking for or demanding a single explanation, preferably in the form of a solid object (clearly marked UFO), which behaves invariably in such-and-such a manner.

Nevertheless, despite the manifest and now clearly demonstrable variety of the Ufos, and the seemingly unending parade of behavioristic tricks that they seem to have in their individual bags, there are certain trends in both their appearance and behavior that can be listed with a view to setting up a classificatory system for them—just as minerals, plants, and animals may be systematized. In due course, the outstanding aspects of Ufo behavior will have to be properly listed, a task that has already been tentatively but very erratically and, it seems to us, quite unscientifically attempted by the U. S. Airforce, but which is being steadily and progressively undertaken by the research department of CSI. One of these basic aspects of Ufo behavior is or should be a cataloguing and analysis of their methods of movement, and it is just this that we propose to discuss herewith.

Concerning this I have, naturally, to rely almost entirely on the published reports of others, since I have not seen a Ufo—apart, that is, from the alleged balloon over northern New Jersey on the evening of the 13th October, 1956, and dozens of what we used to call "green lights" during the war, including one of astronomical proportions and erratic behavior. I have, however, experienced a few cases of phenomena similar to certain of the alleged behavioristic features of Ufos. These were what Charles Fort called "profoundly of the damned" and are of a nature

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that ordinary sane people just don't talk about. In fact, they either try to forget them, or they develop a complete subconscious block against any remembrance of them.

However, not only because I have no reason to suppose that I am insane, but more especially because I know the other witnesses to these occurrences were very sane, and even more so because I *know* that we do not understand everything in general or most things in particular—and especially in my own field; that of animal behavior—I have no compunction in bringing up this unpleasant subject and giving it a good airing. This is something, moreover, that *could* explain many aspects of the behavior of *all* Ufos, whatever their nature, for it concerns the very aspects of many of them that have most puzzled ufologists, from the most technologically conscientious investigators to the U. S. Airforce (see their Bluebook Report).

Nothing in Nature exists—and very probably none can do so—entirely of itself and disconnected from the rest of things. Even a body in space is irrevocably tied by both gravitational and electromagnetic fields to the rest of the Universe. Thus, Ufos must likewise be a part of the Whole, and we may very legitimately assume that they are subject to the same universal laws which can or do exist alongside or in conjunction with that set which we have worked out. Now, while what we call animate entities are at all times subject to both the gravitational and the electromagnetic fields, it is now slowly becoming clear that they, as opposed to inanimate objects as far as we know, are also subject to the influences of a third *field* of equivalent proportions but quite dissimilar properties. Nobody, including Einstein, who labored so long on the problem, has yet managed to combine the gravitic and electromagnetic field properties in a single formula, so there is little chance that this "life field" can at present be so integrated with either or both. This is an abstruse matter that, as of now, verges on the metaphysical, but if you want a very clear and simple exposition of it you should refer to the September, 1956 issue of *Main Currents* (the Journal of the Foundation for Integrated Education, Volume 13, No. 1) and read an article by Winifred Duncan about spiders.

The sum of these concepts is that living things or things controlled by living things are apparently subject to guiding forces that are neither gravitational nor electromagnetic. One of these forces, or phenomena, may possibly be something as yet not understood but to which the name *teleportation* has been given. This often derided phenomenon, has cropped up in all manner of forms throughout the ages and been given all manner of names and explanations from, during the mystic ages, apparitions and so forth, to the "in-here - out - there" description of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Charles Fort's quasi-materialistic period, Dr. J. B. Rhine's ESP, PK, and Telekinesis of modern parapsychology, and Dr. Karl Anderson's subatomic particles in the sphere of current nuclear physics, which in a manner of speaking, seem to play tag with time. To oversimplify, *Teleportation* means that things both material and perhaps non-material can just cease to exist either very rapidly or instantaneously in one place and crop up again complete (and even alive) in another place by either comparatively slow or instantaneous materialization. There is also a suspicion that, time and place being but dimensions in one space-time continuum, things may also bounce about in time, as it were. (See the works of Dr. Harry Price.)

The whole idea is ludicrous to the normal way of thinking, but from the scientific point of view it is very far from ludicrous for, theoretically at least, just some such effects could be produced simply by having a body attain the speed of light and/or surpass it. And do not neglect the fact that Einstein also stated that he considered the speed of light to be only a "theoretical point" at which there was a change-over in conditions, just as there is on a lesser scale at the speed of sound. What he meant was that there is no reason why the speed of light could not be *exceeded* just as the speed of sound has been. What would be the results?

Physicists have made some remarkable statements about this, based on their theoretical ideas as to what would happen about that turn-over point, at which the object (mass) would have caught up with *time*. The mass would be infinite, and the poor object entirely two dimensional—in other words, if it were you, your backside would be as near coming through your front side as can be physically possible. If, then, you extend this concept to speeds beyond that of light (and time) you might be turned inside out and return to normal proportions, but mirrored upon attaining twice the speed of light, or reverse the process by deceleration and so get back to normal, (right side out, as it were) but possibly in quite another place and/or relative time. Of course, you could turn back in both "space" and "time," hence the alleged anomaly of the space pilot taking a jaunt to a star and back in a few hours but getting back forty years later, that has been so much written about both in science-fiction and in popular scientific literature, and even in the popular press. And this brings up the very business that is the crux of the matter under discussion.

You may have heard the bizarre "story," or should I say fable, about some scientists somewhere out west (an expression which always sounds fairly safe, in the East, at least) some years ago who are alleged to have "sent" a cat through a coaxial cable. It's a gay tale, but personally

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I can't credit it. Nonetheless, it may be used as a sort of parable—"Once upon a time there was a scientist who teleported a cat along a wire . . ." If it were true, it would seem to indicate that teleportation is a manifestation of the electromagnetic field. This itself is a strong indication that it is *not* true, but not because of any limitations on physical laws; rather, because the cable appears to be quite unnecessary, for there is evidence—and I don't mean mere hearsay or reports—that teleportation and especially of living things, occurs spontaneously in nature. Most unfortunately, I have witnessed some such myself, in the presence of other people and, by chance, under as nearly "controlled" conditions as possible. Moreover, some very curious if not confirmatory evidence resulted subsequently. I will endeavor to explain.

In 1934, University College in London kindly provided us with a laboratory, built like a hospital room, incidentally, without angular corners and highly sterile, in which to prosecute the final examination of and certain researches upon a large collection of specimens that we had brought back from a zoological expedition to West Africa. The room was furnished with three chairs, a porcelain-topped table, white metal-topped lab benches, two tight-closing, glass-fronted cabinets, and an hermetically sealing oven-type device for bleaching the skulls and bones of animals. I must stress that all the specimens we had in the room had been previously cleaned by boiling in phenol or were in hermetically sealed jars in alcohol or formalin. Our instruments were kept sterilized in a doctor's thermidor and, apart from these, we had only some notebooks, a pot for tea, three cups, and a screw-topped sugar bowl. None of us—my wife, Dr. Philip Seaton, an associate now living in Dublin, Ireland, and myself—used milk and we did not eat in the lab. The windows were metal framed and kept tight shut, since it was mid-winter, the door fitted like that of a refrigerator, and the ceiling was smooth, unblemished, white plaster. As a final rather odd-sounding point I would add that, having recently returned from the tropics, we had all just been most thoroughly examined, including by X-ray and fluoroscope, and could guarantee that we were free from internal parasites. This is what happened one afternoon.

We had brewed our pot of tea and cleared the porcelain-topped table—an invariable rule—which was in the middle of the room but against one wall. We sat down, my wife and I facing each other, Philip Seaton at the other end, and poured the tea. Philip put the pot to his right. The center of the table was absolutely clear; the boiler and cabinets were closed; the benches cleared, since we were through for the day. Suddenly, without any prior indication, a white *parasitic*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

worm (of the Nematode group, as it later turned out) appeared or materialized on the table between us, where it proceeded to wriggle and leap about in apparent convulsions. My wife happens to have a horror of worms. As soon as we could believe our eyes, we leaped for a sterile, glass, corked tube and forceps, caught the worm and dropped it into a narcotizing fluid. Then we carefully preserved it in alcohol and took it to Dr. H. A. Bayliss, Curator of Worms in the British Museum of Natural History, who happened to be a leading expert on the Nematodes. Then we got a second shock.

Let me explain that parasitic nematodes cannot live outside a living host for more than a few minutes. Nor can they live in plain water as the osmotic pressure of their body fluids causes them to burst when dropped into that medium. Nor can you boil them in tea! They can be coughed or snorted up through the mouth or nose and out of a human body, but none of us had so coughed or snorted, and we would have felt it if a four-inch nematode had jumped over two feet out of us; besides, it didn't *land* on the tabletop; it just materialized there under three pairs of what we like to think of as trained (at least zoologically) eyes. Where then did it come from?

And this was just the question that Dr. Bayliss wanted answered—and very badly, because, although the creature was definitely a form of parasitic Nematode, he could not place its species, nor fit it into any known genus, or even family. He naturally wanted to know where we had got it and what host it came from, for it was a very interesting and valuable specimen. Well, we all told him and, of course, poor fellow, he didn't believe us; who would? I don't think I have ever been so embarrassed or frustrated in my life.

But I could never erect a mental block against the occurrence and it has plagued me ever since. Things don't just happen; they must have a cause, and there must be an explanation. Many others who were *not* there at the time have, of course, put forward suggestions, but I am afraid none has so far stood up, apart from the concept of some form of natural teleportation. From this, moreover, have stemmed several most distressing further propositions.

One of the worst is: did my wife's inborn and considerably unnatural revulsion for worms and parasitic ones in particular, have anything to do with the nature of the materialization? If so, is her feeling upon worms stronger than mine about spiders, or Philip Seaton's most curious loathing of crabs? This, perhaps, leads into the whole "field" described above as the third basic, or *Life Field*.

When you have once personally experienced such a phenomenon you begin to take rather a different

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or at least a more expanded view of a lot of other matters. Sticking to my own bailiwick, I began to wonder why I could go out into the jungle in a very small area time and time again and come back with some until then entirely unfound animal specimen when the two highly trained and most experienced collectors who were my colleagues, and I have had two dozen from time to time over the years, never saw a specimen of any of these forms or found any single other new type during weeks of search. I do not claim any particular ability for collecting animals, though it is my profession and I love it. What is more, I have very bad eyesight and am inherently lazy, so that I ought to miss more then even an untrained collector sees. Can, therefore, things crop up through attraction (desire) as well as repulsion (in the case of the worm, revulsion)?

Then, again, one begins to think of the parade of extremely odd animals that have turned up for the first time in the most ridiculous places—*vide*: the first Flying Phalanger, a small marsupial from Australia, known to science, on the roof of a house in London! And then there are those unpleasantnesses recorded by Fort, like the succession of Lynxes found killed on the same stretch of railway track in southern Scotland, though lynxes had been extinct in that country for centuries, and nobody thereabouts had owned any lynxes that might have been lost. What *is* the explanation there?

These are not only abstruse thoughts, they are very close to mystical ones, and they are, at first sight, quite unscientific. But are they? If these things happen, they must have an explanation, and the laws of chance and coincidence being what they are, the search for those explanations is quite properly scientific. It might become simply technical.

Nor is this all. There are reports published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London,* made by its one-time President, Sir David Brewster, of flat-headed, steel nails, among other manufactured objects, being found in the midst of solid, undisturbed strata of limestone at great depths in open pit quarries and so entombed in the unbroken rock that they could not have *fallen* there. Moreover, some showed by their enclosing rust stains that they had lain in the solid rock for some time. If true, does this mean that items can be teleported and land up by mistake in solids as well as in gasses (*i.e.* the air)? If so, we must question the full possibilities in connection with fossils as a whole. Could some of these be teleports and not deposits? And, if so, why do they not occur in igneous and metamorphic strata, but only in sedimentary ones?

One would have thought that this last point would have clinched the matter, and I had always clung to the belief that it did, and so ob-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

viated any further consideration of these most distressing possibilities. Now, unfortunately, even this has been questioned. But, having worked for and obtained a degree in Geology, I have regretfully to admit that I just can't take this allegation and I have, at least temporarily, closed my mind to it as tightly as that of any dyed-in-the-wool sceptic has done on Ufos.

There is, however, considerable evidence that non-animate objects can be, and often are, teleported, either through the influence of nearby animate things, or perhaps through chance when certain conditions pertain locally. Perhaps *all things can be* but only animate things can do it deliberately—lower forms, only in cases of strong attraction or repulsion (revulsion, for instance); higher, or intelligent forms, by actual design, which, in turn, could mean scientifically by technological development of machines in their widest sense. We are even now very close to this ourselves.

Thus, if there are Ufos and there is teleportation, there is a possibility that some of them might use this device, force, or whatever you choose to call it, to move—at least in certain circumstances. Purely inanimate ones, like lumps of ice and so forth, may be jogged about spatially in an erratic manner or following some perfectly natural "law" which in turn may govern the points of "exit" of the said objects, at least within limits. Animate ones might get about semi-voluntarily under stress by this means. Mechanical ones guided by intelligent animate entities might do so under full control and on demand. Thus, "living" energy-entities could use it in the form of excessive speed when menaced; interstellar spacecraft when playing tag with one of our bumbling aerial machines, belching rockets, or whirling sputniks. As distance comes to have a different meaning given teleportation, interstellar transport would display few obstacles to the latter. Right-angled maneuvering by instantaneous starts and stops would be workaday, dimming out or flashing out *in situ* would be natural.

All *we* really lack at the moment is, apparently, a proper belief that teleportation can exist, though, I fear me, there may already be scientifically trained and politically important persons in more than one country who not only *do* so believe but who *know* that it can be done. If this is so, it would adequately explain—and for the first time—the extreme disinclination of all governments even to discuss the matter of Ufos, and their reasons for going to such lengths to steer the public away from the matter. The danger is that some persons, once given the concept of teleportation, might go ahead and find out how it works, or can be made to work. Any who do this will have everything in their power everywhere, forever. Period.

However, neither the electromag-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

netic nor the gravitational fields alone, nor the two together, can, it appears, achieve this manifestation; it requires the third prong of the tripod—the Life Field as well. The Ufos, be they themselves animate creatures or machines controlled by animate entities, would seem to combine the three fields, and this could result in their numerous demonstrations of teleportation, as evidenced by their ability to start and stop instantaneously, to "dim out" slowly or quickly, or to vanish instantly, to make right-angle turns by stopping instantly, and starting again simultaneously in another direction, and by so many of their other peculiarities.

What is more, if teleportation is a natural phenomenon, either operative at all times but rarely encountered, or occurring only in special circumstances, it could also explain many of Fort's other problems, like rains of blood, seeds, frogs, *etc.* and of ice blocks, both as congealed hail and in crystalline slabs; it could also explain the great stones that mysteriously move over dry lake beds and many other such mysteries. But, most distressing of all, this very simple concept brings us right back to our first query; namely, have some persons already constructed Ufos on this earth?

What would a government—totalitarian or democratic, Slavonic or otherwise—do, if they have done so? A teleporter could be as good a defensive as an offensive weapon, depending upon the extent of its capabilities. In fact, as a weapon it could exactly cancel itself out, yet it might be able to stop ICBMs. Further, there would be this life field force built into the thing, otherwise it might not work at all or, like poltergeists, do the unwanted, or the illogical, or, at least, the unpredictable. It is obviously not a simple subject and if anybody has mastered its basic principles, he could not be much further than on the threshold of understanding its full implications and, possibly, still be able to control it only within very narrow limits. (ICBMs are getting surer every day, so why not concentrate on them for the present and keep as quiet as possible about teleporters. They may be the perfect defense at the moment, but still practically useless for offensive action.) This would explain a great deal.

Yet, even if man has only discovered the principles, it still does not preclude the possibility that things have been teleported since the dawn of time, both erratically and without design, and/or deliberately by desire.

This could explain much of the apparently inexplicable behavior of Ufos.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

field report

by . . . Roger Dee

These mammalian bipeds were understandably confusing—even to themselves, as the investigators soon decided.

MSG. #1268-104
COMMANDER QRMAX
EXPEDITION 8703-A
COORDINATOR KHARTH
DEVELOPMENT CORPS
ORAZ, GALACTIC CNTR

Sire and Polity:

It gives me greatest pleasure to forward so favorable a prognosis on the possibilities of this latest planet investigated. My Crew-hundred and I have made an extensive study here for something more than the customary nine *orads* of time, and our entire unit is elated at discovering a world and culture so promising.

Complete coordinate charts and field films are enclosed for detailed analysis, but essential data may be given as follows:

We have here a typical G-3 primary with model nine-planet system, a random distribution of satellites and a scattered belt of debris presumably arising from a tenth planet exploded by unbalanced gravitational stresses. Eight of these planets are sterile or nearly so, leaving only one—the third from its primary—capable of supporting life.

This third, though offering no

It is interesting to speculate on how we really look to these extraterrestrials reportedly visiting these parts in flying saucers, and, to judge from some accounts, promptly beginning a series of socio-anthropological studies while among us. What do these aliens really think of us?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more in material resources of value to Orazian economy than its barren fellows, is an ideal world. Surfaced largely with water but with an idyllic distribution of five continental land masses and innumerable islands, it bears a considerable variety of flora and the most amazing fauna encountered by my Crew-hundred within a score of *decorads*.

Most remarkable of the fauna is a mammalian biped which seems to have risen to dominance within the brief span of a few thousand primary revolutions. It is this biped which has so intrigued us and which promises so much of interest to Orazian observers. Even one of your own eminence and experience, Sire, must be amazed and delighted when you have seen for yourself, as I am sure you will once Ecological Bureau has established an outpost here and a more detailed report is forwarded.

These fantastic bipeds, Sire, represent without doubt the most paradoxical species ever to fall under our observation. My Crew-hundred and I, under concealment of stasis fields rendering us unseen except to each other, have investigated them in every corner of their globe, as enclosed collations will show. Witness our initial findings:

They are of radically different sizes and colors, though invariably of the same form. They inhabit every portion of their world, through all climatic zones, each major division following its own peculiar architectural motifs and manner of dress. Without exception they communicate orally, showing no evidence of telepathic rapport, yet in spite of so formidable a handicap they seem to disseminate considerable information among themselves.

We know this because the ether about this planet is continuously jammed with a most amazing melange of signals, impressed upon electromagnetic wave-forms patently designed to cover as great a range as possible. But here, lest I offer a false impression of our progress, I hasten to say that we have naturally been unable to arrive at any understanding of communications so broadcast. The intrinsic gulf between telepathic and oral cultures is too great for our field linguists to bridge, tho[illegible] may hope that a later and more intensive ecological study will supply a key.

There is more, Sire, far more than my Crew-hundred and I are able to describe with any real clarity. For example, this seems to us a society of individuals each pursuing his own course, yet they are at the same time compressed into graded units consisting of small social groups, looser communities and still broader geographical divisions. And if their complexity is fantastic, their methods of arriving at such complexity are unbelievable.

You will shrink from accepting this, as I shrink from detailing it, but our evidence points unmistakably to the conclusion that they habitually make war upon each

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other, both individually and collectively. Preparations at this moment are under way upon several of the major land masses for such a general conflict, with concentrations of fissionable material being feverishly stockpiled. The compulsion involved is to us impossible of comprehension, though we suspect that it stems from their inadequate system of communication.

The possibilities here disturb me and my Crew-hundred as well, for the reason that such a senseless holocaust might well reach climax and result in overall ruin before an Ecological Outpost can be established to study them thoroughly.

To prevent such a catastrophe, Sire, may I suggest that my Crew-hundred and I be given permission —without overt indication of outside interference, of course—to act? A simultaneous deactivation of all fissionables on the globe should turn the trick, I am sure, and can be managed easily without detection.

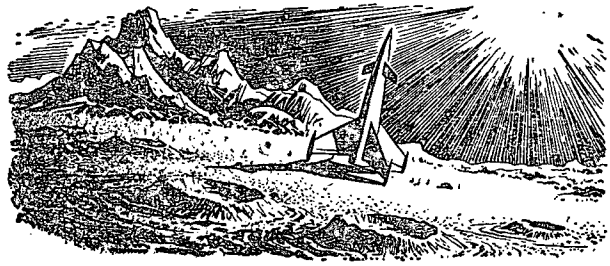
But away from such grisly matters. It is the individual complexity of these bipeds, Sire, and the myriad minor puzzles of their association that so delight us. Their innumerable personal enterprises, in the main as enigmatic as their tastes in entertainment and propagation—the distinction here is vague, since the two overlap in a most confusing fashion—offer an apparently inexhaustible well of surprises. I am sure that you will agree, Sire, when you have had opportunity to witness their behavior at first hand.

And now, since I am in haste to know how my Crew-hundred and I must proceed, I shall terminate my report and await with eagerness your august pleasure.

Respectfully,
QRMAX
COMMANDER
EXP. 8703-A

Postscript:
May I suggest, Sire, that for a well-deserved vacation you accompany your initial Ecological Observation Crew? One so burdened with responsibility as yourself, yet so appreciative of novelty, must find the antics of these bipeds entertaining *in public and hilarious in private.*

Also, recalling your justly famous taste in matters epicurean, may I say that their young, oven-roasted and properly basted with *khaffra* sauce, are delicious?



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

colon the conqueror

by . . . John Boardman

Instinct warned him that his broadsword, with two bodies spitted on it, would be useless. He drew another weapon.

THE dank night winds softly moaned as they whirled around the precipitous crags of the Nemesis Mountains, and the weird cries that came from no human or animal throat echoed through the black gorges. A small band of five men halted beneath an overhanging rock and took advantage of the poor shelter which it afforded.

"A bad storm, this," said one of their number. "We had best go back ere the fiends of the mountains find us."

"Poltroon!" roared a tall, broad-shouldered man with a voice of authority. "Know that the end of a twelve years' quest is near up this night, and I would not turn back if all the jewels of the dark land of Stenchia awaited."

The speaker was a powerful barbarian who stood eight feet tall. Neither a Hyperthyroidean like his companions nor a Stenchian like the inhabitants of the mysterious land through which they had fought their way, this giant was of the strange and almost unknown barbarian tribe of the Cinnamonians. Born in the dark northern forests where his people worshipped the great god Crum, he had made his way in the world by

Californian John Boardman is a graduate student in theoretical physics at Syracuse University (he got his M.S. at Iowa State in 1956), but more than this he is, as will be seen, a devoted student of the life and deeds of the fantastic and almost legendary King of Aquaregia, Colon the Cinnamonian.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

robbery, piracy, mercenary soldiering, and stuffing ballot boxes in the merchant republic of Selumshortia, until, five years before, he had become king of Aquaregia, most powerful of the Hyperthyroidean nations. Tales of his past varied; some said he had been exiled from his native Cinnamonia through the machinations of his half-brother Semi-Colon; other whispered stories of how he had singlehandedly wiped out the devil-priests of the great stone city of Ungawah, armed only with a hand ax and the shinbone of the ancient Stenchian king Snephren the Snub-nosed; still others told how he had once led a band of black corsairs in the sack of the supposedly invincible fortress-city of Xaxoxixlan. In all the nations of the Hyperthyroidean Age his name was known, from frozen Sjarpfang where the snow-apes howled at the moon as they sucked marrow from the bones of men, to the steaming jungles of Hottes-Haydes, where amid ruined stone temples in a sacred palm-grove the blind sorceress Seezallia sang endlessly of ancient, ocean-buried Atlantis and of the unborn future, when Hyperthyroideans and Stenchians alike would be crushed under moving mountains of ice. Invincible in combat, relentless in war, tempestuous in love-making, and a perfect hog at the table, Colon the Cinnamonian had overthrown all obstacles before him to become King of Aquaregia and greatest of the heroes of the Hyperthyroidean Age.

Now, accompanied only by a devoted band of followers, the survivors of the long campaign through ever-hostile Stenchia, Colon lay encamped in the highest crags of the Nemesis Mountains, determined to seek out the evil sorceress Opthalmia and her demon consort Yog-Thuthuthoth, and to end the witchcraft which had caused no babies to be born in Aquaregia for the past seven years.

"Hear you those cries!" exclaimed the man who had spoken to Colon. "Those are things from across the black gulfs of nameless space, called to our hindrance by the dark arts of the she-demon Opthalmia. Methought I heard one cry, saying that ere dawn the soulless things of the nether depths would use our intestines for dental floss."

"Publius Delerius, you are not worthy of the name of man!" Colon roared. "Had you been at the siege of Haemophilia eight years ago, when men on horseback froze in full gallop, then might you perhaps be able to talk of the cold and the hardships of war."

"True, Sire," spoke a third, "and well do I remember, for I fought at your side when we were both mercenaries serving under Queen Libidonia—"

"You said it!" the barbarian monarch interrupted.

"But at that siege, Sire, we opposed nought but the slave armies of Florentius the Flatulent. This night there are arrayed against us all the dark powers at the command of the thrice accursed Yog-Thuthuthoth!"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"O faithful Gasbert, are you also succumbing to the courage-devouring spells of the evil Opthalmia?" said the king, toying with a twenty-inch poignard. "Onward must we go, to rid the land of Aquaregia of the seven-year curse of sterility!"

Colon's shout was echoed by a low rumble from the slopes high above them, and a hollowly resounding laugh boomed from side to side of the narrow defile. A thousand tons of avalanche-driven snow hurtled down into their midst, and Publius Delerius was swept away into the mile-deep gorge that yawned at their feet.

Fearlessly the survivors girded themselves for the last leg of their climb, and, led by Colon, they slowly plodded up the accursed mountain towards the haunted castle where the fiend-born Opthalmia called forth hidden things from the measureless darkness between the worlds.

Twelve hours later only Colon survived, standing armed to the teeth before the great bronze gate of Castle Eldritch, home of the sorceress Opthalmia. His other companions had perished before the perils of the Nemesis Mountains and the black arts of the sorceress: Gasbert had been carried away by a heavily furred vampire bat the size of a lion, Cynides the Cynosure had been slain by a Thing which they had encountered on the trail, and Abimelech son of Abich had been swallowed alive by a hole which had opened in the narrow path.

Nor had Colon himself escaped unscathed from the perils. A scar on the lobe of his left ear showed where the Thing had wounded him in its death-throes, and a giant white mountain-eagle had made away with a tuft of hair from his chest. Otherwise unharmed, the barbarian surveyed the great locked gate which stood before him.

On the gate, sharply outlined in the moonlight, were two great ivory knockers. (For a moment Colon thought of Queen Libidonia.) One of them was labeled "Opthalmia, High-Class Sorcery, Witchcraft, and Necromancy. Gold Medal, Gehenna County Fair; Holder of the C'thulhu Seat of Applied Thaumaturgy at Dom Daniel University." The other was simply inscribed in world-ancient black letters "Yog Thuthuthoth, the Old One."

Without hesitation the fearless Colon hammered on both the knockers. Instantly the huge bronze gate creaked open, and three brass-bound doors faced him, guarded by a woman slave who was chained to the knob of the middle door. The three doors were inscribed "Residents' Entrance," "Tradesmen's Entrance," and "Heroes' Entrance."

"Art thou man, beast, or devil?" cried the chained girl.

Colon looked at the slave. She was a beautiful Aquaregian girl, about twenty years of age. She was tall, well-built, and unnaturally pale, as if she had passed through some terrible experience.

"Save me, if man thou art!" she cried. "I am a slave of Opthalmia,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

kidnapped in my infancy and forced to serve her in her dark and devilish works!"

Colon advanced towards the slave. He flexed his mighty arms, thicker than the thighs of an ordinary man, and pounded three times on the Heroes' Entrance.

"Your name, wench?" asked Colon as he awaited a reply.

"I hight Leucorrhea, daughter of Crustaceus, Duke of Claustrophobia," she replied. "Take me from this awful place and I will be thy willing servant forever."

Colon swept the fainting form of the damsel into his steel-banded arms and embraced her. She fell instantly limp, all the bones in her torso mangled.

"I lose more women that way," muttered Colon, flinging her broken body from him.

At that minute thirteen men in steel armor came pouring out of the door, and Colon lay about him with his broadsword, which would have fit a lesser man as a claymore. Within instants the thirteen lay decapitated, and Colon strode boldly into the great hall.

The hall was deserted; only three mouldering skeletons on the floor, and one on the ceiling, showed that it had ever been occupied. One of the skeletons at Colon's feet lay on its back, the bones of the face contorted in an attitude of stark fear. The other two skeletons lay together, each with a knife in the other's ribs. One of the bony frames was human; the other had two horns growing out of its forehead and five-inch claws on its hands. The fourth skeleton was too far away to be conveniently inspected.

Colon looked up from the grisly remains to see one of the extramundane defenders of Castle Eldritch. An unearthly creature of the nether gulfs stood before him, summoned forth from the night of ages by the sorceress and her unspeakable consort. The apparition stood twelve feet above the tesselated floor of the hall, and its slime-washed belly was six feet from side to side. A fang-filled, slavering mouth filled most of its face, and above it three crimson eyes glittered balefully. The monster had four arms, the upper two ending in huge, long-clawed, grasping hands and the lower two trailing obscene tentacles on the floor behind. A pungent odor of brimstone, open graves, and B. O. hung around the thing, and as it advanced slithering towards him Colon heard a repulsive slobbering sound emerge from its gaping maw.

Instantly the barbarian knew that his broadsword would be useless against this being who obeyed no earthly laws. He swiftly drew from his scabbard a weapon with which he had been provided by the great Hyperthyroidean white magician All-bull Allhazard before he had started his quest. This weapon was nothing less powerful than the shinbone of the ancient semi-mythical Aquaregian hero Diomedes the Dromedary, and as Colon drew it the unworldly monster checked its progress towards

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him and prepared to do battle. Relying on his quick barbarian reflexes, Colon swiftly shoved the shinbone upright into the jaws of the apparition, and the creature of darkness emitted a howl of pain and gave birth to three premature young which the hero dispatched with his sword.

Leaving the huge demon-beast helpless and dying, Colon marched down the length of the hall and through the wall at its end. There he came upon four huge slaves who dragged between them a haggard, badly beaten man who appeared to be a Shammite from the wide meadows to the northeast. Instantly the slaves wheeled and faced Colon, drawing long bloody scimitars as they did so.

"Ha!" cried their leader. "It is Colon, dog of Cinnamonia!"

"Whence do you know me, jungle-scum?" the barbarian demanded.

"I was in the service of Constantius the Concupiscient, Duke of Steatopygia, when your thrice-damned troops sacked the city seven years ago," said the black. "You were then chief of the mercenaries of Libidonia, Queen of Paraphilia. Do you remember Mongwo the Unconquerable, captain of the Black Legion of Steatopygia?"

"I do, verily," said Colon. "I opposed him in single combat, and struck his head from his body."

"Know, O dog of a white," snarled the huge slave, "that I am Mongwo the Unconquerable's brother, Mb'nggwg the Unpronounceable, and I will here avenge his death. At him, men!"

Catlike, Colon glided forward and spitted one of the black men on his sword. Then, with the corpse still on his sword, he charged into the group. Another of the warriors fell before his rush, but the other two pulled back, regrouped, and came at him from both sides.

Some primitive fighting instinct warned Colon that his broadsword, with two bodies spitted on it, would be of little use in combat. He flung it aside and drew another weapon, and at the sight of it the others drew back in astonishment. For Colon had taken from under his breastplate the shinbone of the ancient Agravatian pirate chieftain Niord the Ignored, and with two quick blows Mb'nggwg and his companion were felled with shattered skulls.

Colon turned to the Shammite whose life he had saved. The man blubbered profusely in his native tongue, and kissed the feet of the barbarian.

"What is your name, man?" asked Colon in the fluent Shammitie he had acquired while a cutpurse in the Open District of the Shammitic city of Slivovitz.

"I am Yankel ben-Kalvah," replied the wretch in a quivering voice. "And whom must I thank a thousand-fold for my deliverance?"

"I am Colon the Cinnamonian, King of Aquaregia," said the barbarian.

The Shammite kissed his rescuer's feet again. "Who has not heard of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the great hero Colon the Conqueror!" he babbled. "Of how he strangled the Ghastly Ghoul of Ghory Ghorge with his bare hands! Of how, in the service of Queen Libidonia, he conquered the Steatopygians, the Holothurians, and the Catamites! Of how, in single combat, he slew the Kozak warrior Myerinovitch with the shinbone of the ancient Shammite priest Kecha-Skechkan!"

"Enough of that," snapped the barbarian, wiping his feet. "Where are the chambers of the sorceress Opthalmia?"

"Oh, great king, do not go there!" pleaded the Shammite. "The world has need of Colon living, not Colon dead and fed up to the nameless fiends that the she-demon Opthalmia calls up from the nether regions!"

The great stone wall at their side slowly creaked open. Colon and Ben-Kalvah stared, astounded, at the sight which appeared before their eyes. The room which the folding wall revealed was undoubtedly the private thaumaturgical laboratory of the evil mistress of the mountain castle.

"So!" a chillingly remote voice exclaimed. "You are Colon of Cinnamonia, who would invade Castle Eldritch and destroy the sorceress Opthalmia!"

Before them stood a tall, slender, stately woman whose deathly pale face and hands shone in pallid contrast to her long black gown. Colon had no doubt that this was the witch who had cast the curse of sterility on his kingdom, eleven years ago.

Behind her stretched the grisly outlines of her sanctum sanctorum. Colon saw with horror the many evidences of her dark practices which lined the great room. In one place stood a tall mummy case with a lock on the cover. Next to it a whole unicorn roasted on a spit. Beyond that was a television set tuned to the 1960 Republican convention. In another corner a huge arrangement of glassware decocted a suspiciously reddish fluid into a large vat labeled "For Medicinal Purposes Only." From the high ceiling hung a human skeleton ten feet tall, and next to it a mammoth tusk half again as long. An odious, other-worldly stench pervaded the room, and a greenish haze partially obscured a brass-bound oaken door at the other end of the chamber.

"Won't you come in?" asked the sorceress in a silken voice. "Have a cup of tea—my own special brew."

Colon dashed the cup to the floor, through which it burned a large hole. "You know why I've come here!" he snarled. "Tonight your accursed existence ends under my war-ax, with which I slew the old Aquaregian king Sextus the Oversexed."

"Presumptuous one!" said Opthalmia coldly. "Observe my power, and know that this night shall you satisfy the hunger of my consort, the powerful demon Yog-Thuthuthoth." So saying, she gestured at Ben-Kalvah with a ring on her left hand, and the Shammite screamed in agony.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Colon watched in horror as the prisoner of Opthalmia slowly, painfully melted away into a mass of semi-solid putrescence. The sorceress whistled sharply, and four dogs the size of bears bounded into the room. Each of the huge beasts had two pairs of horns on its head, and a pair of long black wings folded along its back.

Colon seized his ax, and the four devil-hounds sprang on him. With two strokes he laid the beasts low, and then, a look of disgusted hatred on his noble barbarian features, the Aquaregian king advanced upon Opthalmia.

"Now I shall end the curse of sterility that has plagued Aquaregia these eight years past," he said. "Pray to whatever dark gods you worship that your evil soul shall find its deserved place in the hell from which it crawled!"

"Watch your ax," said the sorceress softly, a ghost of a smile fleeting across her pallid face.

The edge of Colon's ax slowly dripped white-hot molten metal on the floor. In anger the barbarian flung the useless weapon across the laboratory and into the door at the room's far end. The heavy oak burned away instantly.

"This, barbarian, is your end," hissed Opthalmia. "Beyond that door is my consort, the most powerful of all the demons who inhabit the outer depths of the non-human world."

Amidst the smoke and mist there advanced towards Colon the most eldritch of an eldritch race, the ultimate horror beyond description, Yog-Thuthuthoth!

Colon swiftly drew from the sleeve of his byrnie his last weapon, the only one that would have effect against this hideous monstrosity from the ancient world-night: the shinbone of the ancient Achornian magician Nausithous the Nauseating. Armed with this irresistible weapon, he feinted a direct thrust at the demon, then struck him heavily from the side against his big toe.

Yog-Thuthuthoth roared a bestial roar of pain, and raised two of his trunks and a tentacle to crush the Cinnamonian. When Colon artfully dodged the blow, the demon raised himself to his full height of thirty feet, rapidly blinked four of his larger eyes, and brought his left middle foot squarely down above the Cinnamonian hero.

Colon stood his ground, raised his shinbone above him, and plunged it into the crevice between the hooves of the extra-mundane monster. The ancient demon stood transfixed as Colon thrashed about with his weapon, and then, his purple maw opened wide, he sent roar after thundering roar echoing from the walls of the great chamber.

"Help!" screamed the devil, waving his horns in the putrid air. "He's tickling me!"

The eldritch monster fell convulsed to the floor, gasped and heaved a few times, threw up several arms and legs, and lay still and decaying. Colon retrieved the shinbone, looked from the huge mass

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beside him to the slender figure of Opthalmia, and said dazedly, "I wonder how they ever managed it."

"Thrice accursed!" screamed the sorceress. "I am bereft! I die!" She drew an ivory dagger from her bosom and poised it before her throat.

With an iron grip Colon stayed her hand. "First remove the curse of sterility from Aquaregia," he demanded.

Opthalmia laughed hysterically and spat in his face. "There never was any curse, you fool," she snarled. "Ever since you first arrived in Aquaregia, in the train of the Ophidian king Sigmund the Sagging, the women of the kingdom made such a commotion over your manly attributes that every other male in the land just plain gave up. But I die happily now, because I will be revenged! At this moment the Horned Guardsmen of Hell are rushing towards this chamber to avenge upon you the deaths of their master Yog-Thuthuthoth and myself. Farewell!" And with a dying effort she wrenched her hand from the grip of the barbarian and plunged the dagger into her throat.

Colon wheeled towards the door, just as a stream of horned swordsmen rushed in. He raised the first above his head, dashed him to the ground, seized his sword, and waded into the others. On and on he went, hacking and hewing, hewing and hacking. . . .

NEXT MONTH—

Lester del Rey's third article in his series—
WHO RULES SPACE?

Eric Frank Russell's sensitive
THERE'S ALWAYS TOMORROW

Harry Harrison's exciting novelet
TRAINEE FOR MARS

Robert F. Young's unusual fantasy
OPERATION PEANUT BUTTER

Civilian Saucer Intelligence's newest report
SHAPES IN THE SKY

and

LEE PRIESTLEY'S full-length action novel of a strangely different Tomorrow—

THUNDERING DEATH

—*in* FANTASTIC UNIVERSE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

face of evil

by . . . Vincent S. Larkin

Warnick didn't like the way the natives were behaving—and how his own men seemed to accept all this rubbish.

THE expedition had been on the planet barely a week when the men of Kuldar came to Major Warnick with their story. At first he refused to see them. Their names weren't on his list of officials, and he was interested only in the ruling class of Terpac.

As leader of the first expedition from Earth to break the space boundaries of the solar system, Warnick was an explorer, an ambassador, and, in his own mind at least, a conquerer.

In 2094 the Intra-Galactic Institute had determined that MS9 was the nearest star to Earth with a planetary system. The North American Division was assigned the project of building the largest rocket ship ever designed.

After the technical details were worked out, the IGI recommended that a scientist head the expedition. In fact, every scientific organization and Geo-Politic Division on Earth had its own man for the job. Finally the Joint Chiefs of Staff, World Police Authority, decided that a military man should head the flight. And so when the ship blasted off in 2096, Major Leslie Warnick was in charge.

A typical New Yorker, in that he was born in California and raised in upstate New York before coming to the city in 1955, Vincent S. Larkin, who works in an advertising agency, makes a first appearance in FU *with this story of the formless horror that broods on the moors by the sea.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Now, sitting at his desk in the plastex prefab that was expedition headquarters, Warnick glanced at the note left by his first sergeant. Five inhabitants of Kuldar were waiting to see him. He scanned his list of VIP's, then flipped a lever on the intercom. "Grandell."

"Yes, sir."

"Tell them I'm busy."

"Yes, sir."

Warnick snapped off the intercom. He reached for an ethnosocial prelim report by Dr. Vesey, head anthropologist at the World University. Crossing out the words THE PLANET TERPAC, he pencilled in MS9-P4. He looked over the heading again and then went on to the report itself:

"While we were completing the atmospheric tests preparatory to leaving the rocket, we discerned signs of life through our portholes. Living creatures could be seen at a distance. They were extremely cautious in approaching the ship. But by the time we had opened the airlock, these beings had moved in quite close.

"Despite the strangeness of our appearance to them, the Terpatians were—"

The Major crossed out "Terpatians." He wrote, "natives of the planet." He looked at this phrase for a second and then glanced at the heading. He crossed out "natives of the planet" and put in a question mark.

Before he could continue, the buzzer sounded.

"What is it, Grandell?"

"It's these Terpatians, sir. They won't leave. They're from Kuldar and—"

"Kuldar?"

"Yes, sir. It's a small village northeast of Kainai." There are spirits or something and they—"

"That's nonsense. I don't have time for nonsense, you know that." He snapped the small lever and turned back to Vesey's report.

A minute later the intercom again buzzed. "This is Jenkins, sir. Headquarters linguist."

Warnick shut his eyes for a second. "Yes, Jenkins, what is it?"

"Sir, these Terpatians seem quite sincere. There really appears to be some kind of trouble near their village. As far as I can make out it's more or less an apparition. They say it's evil. I think it might be wise to at least hear their story."

"Are you telling me how to run things around here, Jenkins?"

"No, sir. It's just—"

"That's enough, Jenkins. I don't want explanations. And I don't want ghost stories or whatever it is these guys are selling."

"Yes, sir."

Major Warnick didn't like the tone of Jenkins' voice. Tomorrow he'd transfer the linguist to one of the field groups. Meanwhile there were five Terpatians cluttering up his office.

"Jenkins!"

"This is Grandell, sir."

"Send one in, Grandell. Tell him I only have a minute."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Yes, sir."

The intercom clicked silent. Warnick took a sip of water from the plastic canteen on his desk. He licked the corner of his mouth. He still wasn't used to seeing these "natives." For the first few seconds it was always a shock.

When the knock came, the Major glanced down at the report on his desk. "Come in."

Opening the door, Jenkins stepped aside. The Terpatian walked into the room and stood before Warnick. Jenkins closed the door and moved up to the desk.

After perhaps thirty seconds Major Warnick glanced up. Sitting in his chair he was at eye level with the Terpatian. He nodded and said, "Get on with it, Jenkins."

Before Jenkins could speak the Terpatian broke into a staccato of excited monosyllables.

Jenkins translated, "My name is Metoc. I am Chief Golar of Kuldar." Jenkins glanced at the Major. "As far as I've been able to find out, sir, a Chief Golar is a combination mayor, police chief and high priest. They head a Golaric Council which runs each village."

"Go on, Jenkins, what else did he say?"

"Kuldar is a village of importance. It is a village of the sea. We have harvested the sea for many centuries. By harvest, sir, he means the gathering of that seaweed the Terpatians practically live on. Apparently it's very nutritious."

Major Warnick glowered at his translator. "Thank you, Jenkins, but I hardly think it's necessary for you to add footnotes. You may not believe it, but I, too, read Dr. Zeiter's ecologic reports."

"Yes, sir. We . . ." Jenkins turned to the Terpatian and spoke slowly. After the reply he continued, "We are people of peace. We harm no one. But there are evil ones near our village. They live on the moors by the sea. They stalk the night. It is unsafe to leave the village at night. We are afraid. Only . . ." Jenkins again questioned Metoc. "Only Xannu, the Great One, knows what they will do next."

Major Warnick sat back in his chair. He forced himself to look at the Terpatian. Metoc's lower jaw protruded hideously, the thick greenish skin twitching near the corner of his mouth.

"Ask him, who these 'evil ones' are, Jenkins, and why the local authorities haven't handled the situation."

Metoc extended his arms and leaned against the Major's desk. A rubbery webbing stretched between his fingers. Answering Jenkins he spit out a torrent of words, hardly more than grunts and whines to an Earthman's ears. The Terpatians spoke a highly inflected language with irregular cadences. Using the Contextual Lingual Analyzer, Jenkins had picked up a considerable fluency in Terpacan. Yet he still had trouble following Metoc, who gasped out the sounds, his large,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

milky eyes bulging uncomfortably from their sockets.

"I'll have to paraphrase, sir," Jenkins said. "The evil ones are ancient forces. No one knows where they come from. Some say from the center of Terpac, others say from outer space where the evil forces always hover. The old women sometimes say the evil ones have been on the Moors of Gulac a hundred years, sometimes they say a million years.

"All Metoc knows is that in recent years the evil ones have been getting either stronger or bolder. Where before only an occasional stock animal wandered near the moors and was lost, now people from the village have begun to disappear. In the last month three men of Kuldar have passed by the moor at night, never to be seen again.

"Recently many drying barns have been broken into and great quantities of seaweed stolen. Always there's a trail leading back to the moors.

"The evil ones are said to dwell in caves. But the men of the village will not go into the moors. They fear not only the treachery of the land, but also the power of the evil ones.

"There is one boy who is said to have seen one of the evil ones. But he speaks of horrors that cannot be believed, for he is now mad."

Major Warnick pushed his chair back and walked to the window. "That's rank superstition." Still with his back to the other two he continued, "You know these people are centuries behind us in everything. They live in the dark ages. If we're going to eventually use them and their planet we must eradicate nonsense like this.

"Tell him that as leader of the liberation expedition from the planet Earth I cannot recognize any 'evil ones.' That these are only stories made up by their old women. And that if the moors are dangerous that's a problem for the local government."

"Is that all, sir?"

"Of course, that's all." Warnick spun around. "Tell him and get him out of here."

When Jenkins translated, Metoc spoke again, this time quite slowly.

"He says, sir, that he must get some help. That he was counting on the great men from Earth to fight the evil ones. That he can't go back to Kuldar without help."

Major Warnick strode back to his desk. "Take him out, Jenkins. If he won't go away, boot him out."

"Pardon, sir, but he *is* a Chief Golar."

"Okay, Jenkins, *you* fight these things on the moors. Wait a minute. Take him to Vesey. He's an anthropologist. Let him track down these specters. I haven't time."

"Yes, sir." Jenkins spoke to Metoc, who bowed to the Major and quickly left the room.

After Jenkins had closed the door, Warnick reached in his desk

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and drew out a box of tranquilizers. He popped one in his mouth and took a long drink from the canteen.

That night Major Warnick was working late when Dr. Vesey knocked on his office door.

"Come in—oh, hello, Doctor."

Paul Vesey closed the door behind him. He was of medium height, slightly built. His movements were quick and sure. Although his hair was graying, his eyebrows were jet black and bushy. He was almost dwarfed by Warnick. Only their eyes were the same, clear, alert, and at times cold.

"Have a seat." Major Warnick stretched. "It's about time I quit, anyway."

"Thank you, Major. I'll get down to business. When I came in this afternoon, I found a Terpatian waiting. He'd been there all day."

"Yes, I sent him over. I thought you'd be interested in these stories. They're a little out of my line."

"They shouldn't be if they're true."

Warnick smiled, "You don't really believe this stuff about evil ones, do you, Doctor? Why, you're a scientist."

"Exactly, Major. I want to be shown. But before I'm shown I won't say something can't be. If we on Earth had refused to act because things were said to be impossible, we wouldn't be here now."

"Hardly a good analogy, Doctor. After all, this is something supernatural, isn't it? We can't afford to believe in ghost stories. Let's leave that to the local priests. We aren't children anymore."

Paul Vesey watched the Major's weathered face: the firm set of his jaws, the wrinkles around the eyes, the hairline that had started to recede. "Our job has many facets, Major. One of them is to study the people. That's why I'm here. And to do my job I may have to investigate things you think unnecessary."

"You may have a job here, Doctor, but I have the responsibility. Don't forget that. I've got to account for everything. For every success and every failure—and that includes wasting time."

"Do you think my work is a waste of time, Major?" Vesey's voice was level, challenging.

Major Warnick looked into the Doctor's eyes. "You were assigned to this mission. It's my duty to help you, consistent with the aims of the expedition and the welfare of the men under my command."

"You sound like a manual, Major. Did you have that memorized? Do you have a punchcard of rules you can stick in that machine you call a brain to meet any situation? Is that the way it works?" Vesey was sorry the moment he said it. He was tired of arguing, of fighting Warnick and trying to hurt him with words. For the first time since he entered the room, he looked down at the floor, waiting for Warnick to speak.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Get out of here, Doctor."

Vesey forced himself to look up. Yes, there was hate in the Major's eyes. Suddenly Vesey felt very old. He started to rise.

"Wait . . . I'm sorry. Please stay."

Vesey sank back in his chair. "I want to apologize for what I just said."

"I had it coming. You're about the only one with enough guts to say it, that's all."

"But it's not true."

Major Warnick smiled. "Only partially." He got up and crossed to the window. He stood for a second, his hand rubbing the back of his neck, staring out at Terpac's broken land. "Look at this godforsaken place. It's like a perpetual twilight out there."

When the Doctor didn't speak, Warnick turned around. "You know, I've dreamed of this since I was a little kid. Of being in the space service, of running a show like this. I remember reading about the *Dauphin* and her crew. The first one ever to try for Mars. That was over a hundred years ago. You know how they wrote it up later. The goodbyes, the take-off. How they tracked the ship through space until it was lost. Completely and thoroughly lost."

Dr. Vesey looked away. He had never before heard the Major speak quite this way. But, of course, he had never before been alone with the Major late at night, the pale night of Terpac filtering through a window. He said, "They never came back, did they?"

"No." The Major's voice was flat. "They never even made Mars. We know that. They just disappeared and became a legend.

"They were the first. But there were others. I used to read everything about those early pioneers I could lay my hands on. My first hero was Colonel Krasnov. I remember the papers the day he finally made Mars. There were banner headlines. For years I kept that front page tacked up on my wall."

Warnick came back to his desk. He poured himself a drink and held the canteen out to Dr. Vesey, who shook his head.

"Didn't you serve under Krasnov?"

"Yes. It was his last trip to Venus. I was quite young. Just a green ensign. At the time, I thought that was all I could ever want."

Neither man spoke for a while. Major Warnick turned back to the window, his hands behind his back. Distant noises sifted in from the other rooms of the base prefab.

Paul Vesey rose and walked over to the window. For a reason he could not quite put into thoughts, he felt that they should stand together.

Outside the jagged purple and green terrain faded away into the gray blur of night. There was a strange aura about Terpac, a ghostly beauty that eventually conquered one.

"And do you now," said Vesey

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quietly, "have what you want?"

It was an unreasonable question, a rude question, one that should never have been asked. Yet when Major Warnick turned, there was no anger in his eyes. There was, instead, a trace of warmth, almost of need, and a lost quality that Vesey had never seen before.

"Do we ever find, Doctor, what we want?"

Since they both knew the answer there was no need to reply. They stood at the window for a minute or so and then walked back to Warnick's desk.

"What do you want, Doctor?"

"A couple of your men when I go to the moors."

The Major sat and began putting papers away, straightening his desk for the next morning's work. "I can spare one—two at the most."

"That's all I need."

"For the morning only. That's best I can do."

"Thanks." Vesey stuck out his hand. The Major said nothing for a few seconds, then he rose and accepted the Doctor's hand.

"It's part of the job, I think you said."

"I'm sure a worthwhile part. Good night, Major."

"Good night."

After Vesey left, Major Warnick snapped off the light. He swung his chair around and sat slightly hunched, staring out into the half-night of Terpac.

The next morning in the briefing room Dr. Vesey was assigned two armed controlmen. Jenkins was his new interpreter.

The group left the base building and started towards the pick-up point which the Terpatians had provided for their visitors. They walked slowly. Although there was enough oxygen in Terpac's atmosphere for survival, the heavy, humid air made breathing difficult. Earthman had found that strenuous activity soon exhausted them.

It never rained in Terpac. There was an incessant condensation and evaporation that still intrigued Baxter, the meteorologist. Thus the light of MS9 filtered through a thin oppressive haze. One could see surprisingly far in this lambent mist of Terpac, yet it seemed to close in about one, like flabby fingers pressing against the throat.

Neither Dr. Vesey nor Jenkins spoke as they followed the controlmen. Their boots left heavy marks in the damp purple soil. When they hit the patches of green mold the effect was like walking on sponge. There was a tendency to bounce and spring about that was almost irresistible. Some of the men had broken curfew and tried it at night. They had returned exhausted, many of them also bruised —a memento of the huge rocks scattered about the fields.

The pick-up point was on the nearby waterway leading to Kainai. Most of Terpac was criss-crossed with these natural canals. Although their courses were irregular, they

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provided the easiest line of transportation. The geologist Karl Zulrac and an assistant were waiting impatiently for a Terpatian steam launch. He greeted Vesey with, "Their damned taxi service got fouled up this morning. How can we do our work when we can't get there?"

"Good morning, Karl." Vesey smiled at the mild explosion. "You know you're a lazy man. You probably planned it this way."

"Bah! They're always supposed to have a launch here. One of these mornings I'm going to steal that jet-scooter Warnick uses."

"I think I see one coming."

The Terpatian on duty was frantically waving a launch on.

While they waited Vesey said, "Karl, you know Jenkins, don't you? He's one of our linguists."

"Yes, of course I do. How do you do." He nodded to Jenkins, his beard digging into his jacket, then he turned to Vesey. "A linguist! What a job you have. I wish I had it. I like to talk to people. But do I get a chance? No. Nothing but chipping and drilling and running that electrostratograph."

"You love it and you know it. Where are you going today?"

"Oh, up beyond some place called Kuldar."

"Ah." Vesey's eyes narrowed. "I'm going near Kuldar myself. Out on the Moors of Gulac."

"The Moors." Zulrac raised his eyebrows. "You must be crazy. I've never seen such dismal land. It's near the sea. I went off the road a bit, but not far. Nothing but miles of rock and fungus, and more fungus. It's not like this stuff here. It grows higher, in ugly clumps. I thought at first it was men crouching, but it was just that soft fungus. I had to scrape some away to get samples. Touched it. Once, just once, though, never again."

"Sounds unpleasant enough," Jenkins said. "No one living there?"

"Not that I saw. It's a strange, dreary land. Worse than the rest of it. Can you imagine that?"

"I can," said Vesey. He looked at Jenkins, "Here's the launch."

Dr. Vesey's group was met near Kuldar by Metoc. Since the Moors of Gulac were not on the waterway, it was necessary to travel the rest of the way in a Terpatian version of an automobile.

Through Jenkins, Metoc explained that because the Moors were dangerous only he had come to guide them. Dr. Vesey said, "Tell him we understand. And that we must hurry."

For no reason Metoc smiled, showing one row of small teeth, most of them black. He appeared nervous. The incessant tic twisted one side of his face. He motioned the others to climb aboard his vehicle, which was apparently a truck. The motor, a primitive steam engine, hissed and sputtered.

Once, as they bounced along a twisting road, Metoc shouted and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pointed vaguely to their right. "I think," Jenkins said, "that's Kuldar over there."

The four Earthmen looked. Through the thin haze they could see a part of the Aydac Sea blending into the faded reaches of Terpac's land. The shoreline was surprisingly smooth, except for one patch of blurred gray. There the outlines of low buildings tangled in a small lump.

"So that's Kuldar," said Vesey thoughtfully.

A moment later, when Metoc turned around, Dr. Vesey glanced towards the scrap of village and smiled. Metoc's eyes half closed in pleasure. Then he whirled back again and they clattered on towards the Moors.

A few minutes later the truck topped a hill and slowed to a stop.

"That must be it, Jenkins."

"Wow," said one of the controlmen, "that other guy sure wasn't kidding. Look at it."

The road bent away sharply to the left. Before them, as far as they could see, lay the Moors of Gulac.

"There's something about it," Jenkins said, "just looking at it, I mean. I can't pin it down, but it's there. A kind of feeling."

"I know," Dr. Vesey said. He motioned Metoc to go on. As they rolled down the hill, he thought: it's as if a huge animal had clawed up this part of the coast and left it to die.

Metoc pulled off the road and stopped the engine. He turned, waiting for the Earthmen to act. No one moved. They sat there staring out towards the sea, hidden by the jagged silence of the land and the eternal mists. They sat and unconsciously listened for the sound of waves breaking upon the shore. They listened and heard nothing and gradually they became aware of the stillness. Slowly it tightened around their hearts.

Vesey took a deep breath. He climbed down from the truck. "Come on, we don't have much time."

Metoc explained that the men from Kuldar had disappeared somewhere along this road. The caves where the evil ones lived were deep in the Moors. He would take them so far and then they would have to go on alone. Vesey nodded agreement and they followed the small figure into the wastelands.

Near the road the land was fairly level. What soil there was faded from purple to a dark gray. Most of the underfooting was gray rock and the inevitable green mold. Soon they came to patches of waist-high fungus growing as brush would on Earth. They were sometimes forced to fight their way through. When this happened only Metoc's head would show, yet he slithered between the fungus faster than the Earthmen.

The already damp air grew rank with a heavy odor of rotting plant life. The rocks beneath their feet were slimy. The plant life closing in about them gave way before their

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bodies like stiff jelly, the broken pieces oozing thickly to the ground. The fetid aftersmell of the paths they broke followed them like a living creature.

Metoc had now moved back with them. They stayed close together. The cold mist had grown denser, grayer, as if to seal them in the Moors.

Soon the going became rougher. They were forced to skirt large patches of fungus. The rocks became larger, the gullies deeper. Marshy pools of black water slowed their progress.

Once Jenkins slipped and Vesey reached out, grabbing his arm. When he pulled away, the palm of his hand was wet. Already the damp foul air of the Moors was leaving a slimy film on their skin.

They reached the top of a particularly treacherous ridge and Metoc stopped. He pointed ahead. The evil ones were believed to live close. He would go no further. It was dangerous even here. Jenkins looked at Vesey. "He won't go further, Doctor. Says he'll wait here. That we should leave one of our controlmen with him. He's not afraid, but it's better not to be alone on the Moors. Even during the day."

Vesey looked out over the Moors, to where Metoc had pointed. He thought, that will leave only one controlman to go with us. He looked down and kicked a hunk of damp spongy mold out of the ground. What was the matter? Was he afraid? After all, hadn't he told himself that the controlmen were along only as a precaution? So far nothing had happened. Nothing would, of course. It's just an unpleasant place and he was letting it get under his skin.

"Come on, Jenkins, let's go." He turned to one of the controlmen. "You stay with Metoc, we'll be back as soon as possible."

Vesey again looked out across the stifling silence of that strangely waiting land. He glanced back. The haze crouched about them as if listening for the drift of their lost voices. And suddenly he knew what had been plucking at his consciousness ever since they had entered the Moors. There was a feeling about the place. Jenkins had felt it too. A feeling that one couldn't quite catch hold of, perhaps that one had been afraid to face. But now he knew what it was. The thought sent a chill across his back and into his vitals. For despite the creeping molds, despite the fungoid trembling of the great plants, and despite the small group of men gathered there on the ridge, there was over the Moors of Gulac an aura of death.

Vesey wondered if the others felt it too. The complete deadness of the region. Or was it a waiting for death? He didn't know. All he knew was that the others were waiting for him to move, that he was after all a scientist, and that in the end he had to find the answer himself.

He wanted to speak. He had an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

almost uncontrollable urge to hear his own voice. Yet there was nothing he could say. The time for words had been back in Warnick's office. He stumbled down the side of the hill; the others slid after him.

Soon they had lost sight of the ridge where Metoc and the controlman waited. With the heel of his boot Jenkins slashed at the fungus, leaving a trail to follow back. As they followed a long gulley a soft, rhythmic echo began to caress their ears. The three men stopped and listened. It was an insistent brush-like sound which rolled around the rocks and the fungus.

"What is it?" whispered Jenkins.

"I don't know—unless it's the sea. Of course, that must be it. We should be nearing the coast."

"Doctor," Jenkins looked about them. "Suppose we keep going and do reach the sea. What then? What exactly are we looking for?"

"I wish I knew."

"And if we don't find anything?"

"We've found an answer."

"Maybe," Jenkins said.

Vesey looked at his linguist. "Yes," he said quietly, "you're right, maybe."

The controlman clicked off the safety on his rocket weapon. The noise sounded very loud in the rock-rimmed gulley. When the other two glanced at him, the controlman explained, "The terrain here was so rough I kept it on."

"A good idea," Vesey said. "Well, let's—"

His words were cut off by a muffled report sounding distant and forlorn.

"That was a shot," said the controlman. "And it was from a rocket weapon."

They had just turned to start back when the scream stopped them. It sounded like an animal, yet Vesey knew in his heart that it had been human.

The scream had been so horrible that he looked at the others, searching desperately in their eyes for a different answer. When he found none, he realized there was no use of hurrying. It would be much too late.

When they regained the ridge the rocket weapon lay upon a bed of gray-green mold. One of the rockets was missing from the magazine. Vesey looked about. The mist curled and thickened into strange dying shapes.

There was no one else upon the ridge.

The controlman tightened his grip on his rocket weapon. He glanced sharply around. "They have to be somewhere nearby. It was only a few minutes ago when we heard the scream. Serly!" He shouted into the mist, "Serly, where are you?"

There was no answer. Not even an echo. His voice had been smothered by the enfolding silence of the Moors.

The controlman said, "We have to find him."

Jenkins' face was an ashen gray.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"This mist could swallow a person in a few seconds. Where would we look?"

"Jenkins is right," Vesey said. "We can't do anything alone. Our best bet is to follow our trail out of this place."

The controlman said, "I don't like the idea of leaving without Serly. He's my best friend."

"This isn't a question of friendship anymore. It's a matter of survival. Don't you feel it all about us? It's waiting. The evil. The malignancy. It's slowly closing in. If we don't get out of here . . ."

There was something in Vesey's voice that finally frightened the controlman.

He nodded silently and the three men started back.

After they had gone a short distance, the controlman stopped. "We forgot the rocket weapon."

"Forget it," Vesey said. "We can't go back. Besides, it didn't help them much."

And so the three Earthmen stumbled and slid across the Moors. But if they had returned to the ridge, if they had looked carefully in a crevice a few yards off in the mist, they would have seen an amorphous shape convulse and slowly ooze away its life. For that one rocket had not after all been wasted.

When Vesey walked into Control back at the base, he learned that Warnick was in Kainai attending a conference of Terpatian leaders. Grandell said, "He won't be back until tonight, Doctor. Can I help you?"

"Can you reach him, Grandell? It's urgent."

"Well . . . it's about midday. I can get his orderly on the visionphone. Is something wrong, sir?"

"We lost Metoc and one of our controlmen."

Grandell licked his lips nervously, "Lost, sir? Out on those Moors? You don't mean . . ."

"I mean, Grandell, they disappeared. I don't know what happened to them. Whatever it was, we need more men. Major Warnick should be notified."

"Yes, sir. Communication's over here."

Five minutes later Vesey and Warnick were face to face over the visionphone.

"And that's all you know?" Warnick's voice was hard, the lines around his mouth showed a growing annoyance.

Dr. Vesey replied, "That's all."

"Why didn't you search for them?"

"If you had been there, you'd know."

"That's not an answer. It's not even an excuse."

"I don't need an excuse." This time it was Vesey who became angry. "I had a decision to make and I made it. If we had stayed there it would have gotten us too."

"*It*, Doctor?" Warnick's voice was edged with acid. "Are you going to tell me there are really 'Evil Spirits' out there? If one of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

my men is missing, it's because of that Terpatian you had with you. I don't trust them as far as I could throw one of them."

"Major, I'm not interested in your prejudice." There was a quiet determination in Vesey's voice, "I *am* interested in the lives of Serly and Metoc, that is, if they're still alive. I swear to you, as sure as I'm standing here, there's something evil out on those Moors. I don't know what it is, but I know it's there. I felt it. I know it's hard for you to believe—it's something indescribably horrible. I think some of it's still with me. My . . . my hands still shake a bit." Vesey paused for a second. The anger had slipped away. He felt tired. It was only midday, yet he wanted to go to bed, to sleep, to forget.

"Major, I won't go back there alone. I'm afraid to. But I *will* go back if you give me some of your men. If we stick together maybe our numbers will help us. Maybe we can hunt it down. Maybe we can get it somehow, before *it* gets us."

The two men looked at each other over the visionphone.

"Okay, Doctor, you win." Warnick spoke to his orderly off-screen, "Tell Captain Lesser to take over here—give my apologies and so on, and then warm up the motor." Turning back he said, "Grandell."

"Yes, sir."

"Alert all off-duty men. Have everybody on action status when I arrive." The screen went dead.

Twenty minutes later Doctor Vesey sat with Major Warnick as the jet-scooter roared towards Kuldar. In the rear sat six controlmen, talking in undertones. Wedged in near the pilot was Jenkins, his arm curled about a rocket weapon.

Warnick was looking straight ahead, into the haze. "If something's happened to Serly, we'll have to teach them a lesson. We can't afford to let these people think we're soft."

"I'm sure it's not the Terpatians. They're scared stiff of the Moors. You talked to Metoc yourself."

"You seem to forget savages can be treacherous."

"Savages?" Dr. Vesey's voice was incredulous. "How can you call them savages?"

"Well, primitives then—is that Kuldar?" The jet-scooter, roaring in low, approached the small village. Although the houses were drab, the streets looked clean. There was an unmistakable impression of order about the place.

"Yes," Vesey said, "that's it. Now we have to go up the coast and in a bit."

The jet-scooter veered away from the cluster of small, low homes. Vesey continued, "How can you call them primitives? Oh, technologically they're a few centuries behind us. But there are other factors to consider when studying a race. Where you only meet the politicians and the policemen, I meet the workers and the scholars. Terpatians, on the whole, are quiet, thoughtful people."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Major Warnick shifted in his seat. He glanced back at the controlmen waiting, their weapons by their sides.

"Well, Doctor, I know one thing. I'm going to clear up this business for once and all, and then I'm going to raise hell in Kainai."

"Maybe you'll change your mind when we get down on the Moors."

"I rarely do that, Doctor. That's one of the reasons I lead rather than follow. If there's a mystery down there, that just complicates things a bit. Is that it ahead?"

The jet-scooter was slowing up. The visibility was getting poorer, but there below lay the Moors of Gulac.

"Yes," Vesey said. "That's it."

"We better set down by the road where you went in. We can't see a thing from the air."

The Major gave the instructions to his pilot. Dr. Vesey leaned forward in his seat. "I can almost feel the evilness rising from that damnable place."

Warnick said curtly, "Look Doctor, there's no such thing as evil or good. There are only enemies or friends."

"Is it really that simple, Major?"

"It's that simple."

"For our sakes, I hope it is."

A few seconds later they landed.

The controlmen Major Warnick had brought with him were all armed with the conventional rocket weapons. After checking their magazines and ignition switches, they went into patrol formation, with Dr. Vesey, Jenkins and the Major in the center.

Warnick looked over his men and then glanced about him. The Moor stretched ahead, hidden in the unmoving cloak of mist. Vesey was watching him. He realized that he was breathing heavily. "Okay, let's go. Move on quickly, but be careful."

The party moved out, following the trail Vesey had taken earlier. At the start the men cursed quietly at the slippery rocks and the fungus and the gray mist. But slowly the mute hostility of the land silenced them. They slowed the pace almost imperceptibly. Warnick sensed the uneasiness in his men. He fought against it in himself, but as the small group of Earthmen penetrated deeper and deeper into that strangely fertile desert, he too felt the chill and the inexplicable fear.

Once he turned to Vesey, "What do you think it is, Doctor? Whatever got Serly and Metoc?"

"I wish I knew."

"But you must have an idea. You've talked with the people."

Vesey shrugged his shoulders. "There are stories, of course. About these Moors. About things that happened many years ago. I've written up such stories as superstitions, legends."

Dr. Vesey knew he was expected to continue. Why had he called the folk tales superstitions? They could have been history. Was he afraid to believe them?

He went on, "Metoc's version

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was typical, but there are others, of course. In some of them, the ancient beings have dwelt on the Moors since the beginning of time. They are reinforced periodically. Sometimes from the blackness of space, sometimes from under the ground. One old hag said the evil ones last came a hundred years ago. From space, that time, and that these are the ones that are now causing the trouble."

"I can see," Major Warnick said with a bitter smile, "someone dropping in from space, but not out of this blasted stuff." He glanced down at the rock and slime-coated ground.

"Ah, but it's possible the evil ones do come from the center of Terpac. A flaming center. You see, Major, the Terpatians have a hell, just as we did at one time."

"Then they must also have a heaven."

"There you're wrong." When Warnick looked at him, Vesey continued, "In one way, the Terpatians are quite an extraordinary race. They have a hell—but no heaven."

Nothing else was said until they came to this ridge. The rocket weapon still lay on the ground. One of the controlmen picked it up. "One rocket gone, sir. Seems to be all right."

"Bring it along," Warnick said, then, "all right, we'll fan out in groups of two. If you see or hear anything, I repeat, anything suspicious, sound off."

After only thirty seconds, one of the controlmen shouted, "Over here, sir. We've found something."

The controlman stood over a crevice half closed by a creeping fungus. At the bottom of the crevice lay the shattered remains of a body. Yet was it a body? Or was it a scream at night shaped into a sickening, jellied thing of horror?

Jenkins turned away, fighting the nausea that curled his stomach.

Warnick looked at Vesey. He said, "Serly must have gotten it with his rocket."

Just then another controlman shouted, "I think we found a trail of some sort, sir."

On a line leading along the ridge, then cutting off towards the sea, was a fairly recent trail. The marks were uneven, as if made by large staggering animals.

The controlman who had found them said, "They're getting fainter, sir. Sort of melting in with the soil and the vegetable stuff. But we can still follow it."

"Let's go, then," snapped Warnick. He called in the other men and re-formed the patrol.

Slowly and carefully the Earthmen moved deeper into the Moors of Gulac. The haze thickened a few yards above the ground. The pale light grew dimmer. As they made their way across the rocks and gray moss, the men became sharply aware of the silence. The only sound was the sibilant tread of their boots.

The terrain became increasingly rough. The crevices were deeper and wider, small valleys lined with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the shattered, frozen forms of the ever-present fungus. There was an ancient smell of musty decay. Yet mixed with this smell of death was an unmistakable odor of plant generation, rising from the creeping softness of the fungus. Vesey felt that the Moors of Gulac was a living thing, moving behind his back, invisible and noiseless.

The men moved ahead, following the faint marks down the length of a deep narrow chasm, passing not only the dripping flesh of the plant life but also small dark caves. Suddenly they could hear the soft distant scrape of the sea against clean rocks. The very caves they passed seemed to echo ghostly cries. The chasm widened. They came into a flat, circular place, bounded by towering rocks.

The Earthmen walked into the center of the opening and stopped. Opposite them was the black mouth of a huge cave. To the side of the cave, tangled among the rocks, overgrown and almost hidden by the fronds of huge fungus lay a twisted shell of metal.

For half a minute or more none of the men spoke. Each struggled with his own thoughts and emotions. Finally the advance controlmen looked back at Warnick.

"All right, let's see what it is. The rear guard will stay on watch in the center here."

Vesey and Jenkins stood to one side as the controlmen crowded up to the wreckage.

"Looks like a space ship."

"Can't be, these Terpatians don't have 'em."

"It sure is burned out."

"Look, here's a skeleton."

"Let's see."

"Hey!" one of the controlmen shouted from the side, "over here, in these rocks, I'm sure they're bones."

"Watch that slimy stuff," someone said with disgust.

"There's another skeleton."

"The poor devils never stood a chance."

Major Warnick turned away. He came over to Dr. Vesey.

"I don't understand it. It looks like a space ship, all right. Almost like the DM4's they used a hundred years ago."

Vesey said, "You mean it's an Earth ship."

"I don't mean anything. I said it looks like the same general type. It's too burned out and twisted to really tell."

"And the skeletons?"

Warnick looked away. "They're not Terpatians."

Just then a controlman shouted from the cave mouth, "Hey! There's some more in here. Bring over the lights."

The group moved to the cave mouth. Two of the controlmen took out small radiant-lights from their cases. In a second the darkness of the cave was cut by brilliant beams of light. Water dripped sporadically from the lichen-covered ceiling and walls onto the rock floor. Just inside the mouth of the cave two

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

skeletons were heaped in an embrace of death. Farther in there were strange marks upon the walls.

Dr. Vesey looked around, then he turned to Warnick. "Some of them survived for awhile. Those bodies couldn't have been thrown into the cave."

"Just the two of them," mused Warnick.

"This cave might go back quite a ways."

Warnick glanced at Vesey, then said to his men, "Flash those lights ahead."

The Earthmen moved through the silence of the cave. The damp air was cold. Vesey felt a chill through his body. He was glad when Jenkins moved up alongside.

Warnick, leading the group of controlmen, suddenly stopped them. He motioned for Vesey to come ahead.

The cave had opened on an underground room. When the Doctor saw what the radiant-lights were flashing upon, he drew in a quick breath. It was the most ghastly sight he had ever seen. The floor of the room was covered with the stained, moldy rubble of countless bones.

Major Warnick had been hardened to carnage in the space service, yet this room of death left a hot nauseous ball in his stomach. He looked at Vesey. When their eyes met, each knew what the other was thinking. The real horror lay not in the slimy sea of blackened bones but in those scattered heaps that were still whitish.

Warnick looked back to the room. He closed his eyes, trying to think, to decide the next move. The men pushed forward, gazing at the scene. None of them spoke. It was so quiet that the shot and the scream of terror and agony which followed shattered the buried air of the cave like a thin glass.

The Earthmen had almost reached the mouth of the cave when the radiant lights picked up the things. The bloated, jelloid things slushing towards them.

Major Warnick whispered hoarsely, "Weapons, ready to fire."

The things hesitated in the glare of the radiant-lights. They were momentarily blinded. The grotesque tableau lasted only a second.

"Fire!"

The crash of rockets sucked through the quivering flesh.

"Fire!"

The cave roared in a nightmare of noise, of gurgling aborted screams.

"Fire!"

Still one of them came on, shattered and noisome.

"Fire!"

The sound of rockets echoed out of the cave. Only the soft trickle of death remained. And then the racking struggle of men being sick.

Late that night Major Leslie Warnick wrote in the logbook:

"Today three men and—" He hesitated for a second. "—a Terpatian Golar from the village of Kuldar were lost in line of duty on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Moors of Gulac. The deaths occurred in action against a pack of wild animals which had terrified the inhabitants of the region. The animals were completely destroyed. We have assured the populace that they have seen the last of the Spectors of Gulac Moors . . ." The Major hesitated.

He was relieved to hear the knock.

Vesey came in, closed the door, and walked silently over to the Major's desk. He sat down and asked, "What did you say?"

Warnick pushed the logbook across the desk. After reading, Dr. Vesey said, "It's a very short report."

"What else is there to say?"

"That ship . . ."

"I've told the men that it couldn't possibly be from Earth. That it must be Terpatian."

"Wasn't the *Dauphin*—"

"Doctor, excuse me, but I think I know best in matters such as these."

Vesey nodded. He caught Warnick's eye. "One can't tell what will happen after a hundred years, you know."

"That's impossible."

"Is it? This climate, atmosphere. Trauma after the crash, fear and isolation, a forced adaptation. A changed metabolism. How do we know how our bodies would react —and then our minds?"

"You're talking nonsense, Vesey. This incident is closed. It's all in the report."

Dr. Vesey rose and went to the window. He stared blankly at the graying night that differed so little from the day. "You're right, of course. It's closed."

"I'm glad you understand." Major Warnick rose wearily from his chair. He said softly, "The face of evil has a strange smile."

Vesey turned and the two men faced each other. They stood there for only a second or so, then Vesey said, "I must be going. Good night, Major."

"Good night—Doctor?"

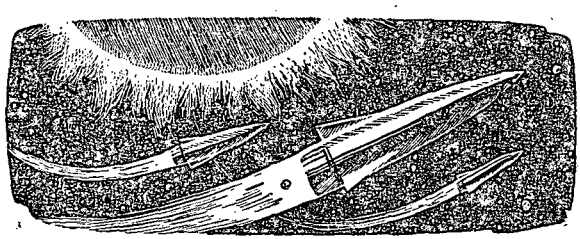
"Yes?"

"Have you looked at yourself, your eyes, in a mirror tonight?"

"No . . . why?"

"I did. An hour or so ago. I thought I looked different. Do I . . . look different to you?"

"No," said Dr. Vesey, "you look just the same." He closed the door. Back in his room, he took out his mirror and turned it to the light.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bait for the tiger

by . . . Lee Chaytor

This was a new kind of war in which strange weapons must be used against these aliens menacing the Earth.

IN THE Pentagon there is an unmarked office, or rather, a suite of three small rooms, which is always kept locked. The lock is an unusual one—there are no keys for it. The very ordinary-looking doorknob is made to turn only when any one of three men impresses his fingers and thumb against its educated metal. These men are Abbot, Jones and Chester.

Abbot and Jones spend their working hours in the small reception room. Abbot records certain remarkable data on microfilm which he locks away in the second, vault-like chamber. Jones merely sits with his eyes on the outer door and his hand on a gun. For man, being human, can be bought or compelled. Jones has used the gun once . . . on his best friend. Not that he hesitated. His greatest fear—nightmare, rather—is that someday the gun will not be effective against what comes through the door.

The office is at the dead-end of a dogleg corridor. A charge of explosive strong enough to force it open would atomize the whole building.

The very existence of the office is known to only six people in the

Californian Lee Chaytor, in writing BAIT FOR THE TIGER, *says she tried to give a rational explanation for the point raised by Lester del Rey in his widely discussed article,* THE FLYING SAUCER MYTH, *in the August* FANTASTIC UNIVERSE, *of* why *the aliens should hang around doing nothing for ten years.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

United States: Abbot, Jones and Chester; the President of the United States, an Air Force General named Tudor and Kilgore, head of the F. B. I. Among these six, the office is known as Biep—which stands for Bureau for the Investigation of Extraterrestrial Phenomena. Officially, these six men are amongst the loudest scoffers at Unidentified Flying Objects. Unofficially, they are betting their lives and the safety and freedom of 175 million people that Artemus Chester can recognize and control any entity or group of entities which might come in out of space and make a landfall on Earth.

Tem Chester is an ordinary-looking man, slightly under average height, with receding brown hair and vague blue eyes. Like Abbot and Jones, he is attached to the Air Force as a civilian clerk-typist. He is, however, potentially the most important man on Earth—a one hundred per cent efficient telepath. He can read any mind, any time, and up to distances of a mile before selectivity becomes blurred. It was he who warned Jones that his friend was coming down the dog-leg passage, wearing a plastic glove on which Jones' fingerprints had been painstakingly etched. Chester felt rather badly about that. It was such a waste of loyalty and effort. The Embassy which had corrupted Jones' friend and prepared the glove hadn't any idea of the real business of the office—and wouldn't have been interested in it if they had known. They thought it was a secret weapon file.

Chester also knew the moment the girl turned into the corridor and approached the office. She was accompanied by Kilgore. Chester scanned them, probing deep. At what he found in the girl's mind, he rose from his chair and hurried into the outer office.

Abbot and Jones looked up sharply.

"Kilgore's coming — he's got something at last!"

Jones crouched and trained his gun at the door.

"No, no! She's friendly, and she's stumbled onto something important. Let 'em in."

Abbot opened the door while Jones kept his gun ready. Mark Kilgore showed a beautiful big woman into the room ahead of him and Abbot snapped the door shut.

"Are we clean?" asked Kilgore.

Chester closed his eyes and made a mental sweep of the building and environs. He opened his eyes. "All clear. Nothing but the enlisted personnel doing the usual work and thinking about food and women. How animal can the human male get?"

"Let's not go into that." Kilgore glanced at the girl. "Mrs. Norton, this is Mr. Chester, Mr. Jones, Mr. Abbot—"

As they bowed and smiled meaningless phrases, Steve Abbot was thinking, *what a woman! Didn't know they grew 'em that big.* And then, *she's like a ripe peach, sweet*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but not cloying . . . WHOA, *Abbot! This is a married woman!*

Kilgore was talking: "Mrs. Norton is Phil's wife. She has a definite lead that may tie in with those two deaths."

Chester was suddenly angry. "We've wasted a lot of time because you kept me boxed up here. I told you you should have let me travel! What good can I do sitting here? Did you think They would come to visit Washington like tourists? Now it looks as though They've landed, maybe established some kind of base out in that empty country. No telling how we're going to get rid of Them. If you'd let me go into that district—"

Kilgore glared back at him. "Sure! Let you go in and end up like Nunn and Norton!"

Abbot caught the flash of anguish on the girl's face. "We've got no evidence anything's happened to Norton," he said quietly.

The girl looked from Chester to Kilgore. "You already knew about Ore Valley?"

Chester frowned at her, then his expression cleared. "No—your first name's Valentine, isn't it? Pretty.—You told me."

Kilgore said impatiently, "Mr. Chester is a telepath. He reads minds. Saves time." He was keyed up at the prospect of definite action. "But just for the records, will you go over there to Mr. Abbot's desk and tell him the whole story, just as you told it to me? Then Mr. Chester and I will want to see you in his office." He hustled the smaller man into the next room.

Steve Abbot stood up and held a chair for the girl. He was a lean, sinewy six feet. His gray eyes were friendly behind horn-rimmed glasses. The girl thought he looked more like a college pole-vaulter than an F. B. I. agent. His speech was easy and quiet as he showed her the hand mike and explained the technique of the recording device.

He lifted the mike to his own lips and, pressing the switch, spoke the date and hour. "Mrs. Valentine Norton reporting to BIEP: Subject is auburn haired, brown eyes, height about six feet . . . ?" he hazarded.

The girl nodded.

"Weight?"

"One forty," supplied Val, smiling for the first time in days. "Age, twenty-five. Occupation, dancer; employed at a night club called the Gold Umbrella. As a kid, I studied for the ballet, but I grew too big. Now I do a sort of cleaned-up muscle dance." She noticed his puzzled look. "It's billed as 'Valti, an Oriental Specialty.' With a snake. Cobber's the real ham in the act. He's just a robot cobra, with his action patterns built in—but try telling him. He thinks he's the star.— That what you wanted?"

"Thanks," grinned Steve. He recounted the facts into the mike, then handed it to her. "Now, just take it slowly. Mention everything that comes into your mind in con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nection with your—with Phil Norton. We never know what apparently unimportant detail Tem Chester might find helpful."

Val Norton drew a deep breath and clamped her fingers tightly around the mike. She kept her eyes on it as she talked, avoiding Steve's intent gaze.

"Phil and I were married in Mexico three months ago. I didn't know he was an F. B. I. agent at that time. He caught my act at the Club one night, came again, asked me to dinner . . ." She moistened her lips. "One night, driving me home, he suggested that we get married. We flew to Mexico in a friend's plane the next night, after my last show, and were married in a little village church at dawn. Phil told the priest we'd have the civil ceremony later. He's very persuasive."

Steve wondered how he'd persuaded the Immigration boys to overlook an unauthorized flight; then decided Norton had probably not bothered to notify them.

"We each kept our own apartments and met when we could," the girl went on. "A month ago I asked him when we'd get the American license, and then he told me about his work. That he was in secret service and was waiting to be sent on a very dangerous mission. So of course there mustn't be any publicity, the kind reporters might dream up if they got hold of the fact that he'd married a night club dancer. It might even cost him his job." She met Steve's eyes defiantly. "Understand, I'm not complaining. We were terribly happy. Phil enjoyed making mysterious phone calls to me, using private code words, arranging secret meetings. He was like a boy—"

"Juvenile delinquent type," thought Steve sourly. Keeping this nice girl dangling for no good reason. Phil Norton would like it better that way, the good-looking heel. His enormous appetite for intrigue and double-dealing made him a daring and skilful, if not too reliable, agent. And his private life, Steve reminded himself sternly, is no concern of mine. The girl was speaking into the mike again.

"Last Thursday, he phoned me that he had his orders. He picked me up after the show and told me he was leaving on a mission so dangerous that he might not return. I was . . . upset. I begged him to send me some kind of messages so I'd know he was all right. He agreed to call me on the phone every evening and give me his destination for the next night—"

"That was a breech of regulations," said Steve. "Inexcusable on a job as important as this one."

The girl looked at him. "It was all my fault. I—I cried." Her full, sweet lips trembled.

Steve swallowed what he wanted to say. "Go ahead."

"I didn't hear from him for two days. Then Saturday night there was a call from a little village called Hermit, Wyoming. Phil joked about

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it; said it had a population of ten hermits, all grouchy. But I found it on the map. Phil said he expected to reach Ore Valley by the next night, and be back on the main highway the following night, at Rawlins. I haven't heard from him since."

Steve switched off the mike. "I see why Tem's so excited. This may be the break we've been waiting for. You see, it pin-points the trouble spot, and ties in with some other information we've got."

"You don't know where Phil is then?"

Steve shook his head. "We have not heard from him since he left Los Angeles. That's not unusual," he hurried to add. "An agent often makes no report till he returns, especially if he's on a delicate mission. Too much chance of tipping off the subject."

"When I coaxed him to keep in touch with me, I jinxed him."

"Your husband's a grown man and a trained agent. He knew exactly the risks he was taking. He—"

Jones got up suddenly and went to the door. Someone was knocking loudly. Abbot signed the girl to silence and opened the door, revealing a grinning official messenger.

"What's with you guys—you hiding out? Took me all day to locate you. Why don't you put up a sign?" He tossed a small parcel at Steve, who caught it deftly. Sketching a salute, he went off down the hall, whistling.

"Find out who told him where we were," began Steve, but Chester appeared in the inner doorway behind him. "I noticed him asking for us several times and guided him here," he said. "Only our agents know where we are. That may be from Norton."

He opened the package. A roll of tape in a tin container fell out. Chester noted the code letters. "It's Norton's report. Put it on the player, Steve."

The message began abruptly. "N-317 from Hermit, Wyoming. People very tense and unfriendly. Population about ten. Two families moving out as I drove in. When I tried to find out what was wrong, got evasive or hostile answers. Prices up about five hundred per cent; residents making a final killing before abandoning, is my guess. I taped some conversations while subjects unaware . . ." Here followed several voices, speaking just a few words each: ". . . no, the mines haven't played out, but competition with Ore Valley's too tough. Most of us figure to get out pretty soon . . . those guys are squeezing out all the small operators . . . my wife doesn't like the climate; says it gives her asthma . . . country's gone sour. I'm movin' on . . . we want proper schools for our kids. . . . Say, mister, you got a buttinski license? . . . YOU WITH THE CENSUS BUREAU?"

Chester studied the wrapper. "Mailed from Hermit, postmarked Monday. Probably dropped it in the post office Sunday morning before

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he left for Ore Valley." He looked elated. "That gives us a real lead. Somewhere between Hermit and Ore Valley. Come in now," and he beckoned Val and Steve into his private office. Kilgore was pacing up and down, a cigar clenched in his teeth. "Norton came through with a tape that confirms what I found in Mrs. Norton's mind. He's disappeared between Hermit and Ore Valley. What's there?"

"I checked the whole state when we got those other reports. Ore Valley's a fair-sized company town; been a slow but steady producer for years. It's locally owned, and you know company towns. Closed corporation. My guess is the landings, if any, are in the wild country between Hermit and Ore Valley."

"I'm flying over the whole area as soon as you can get me a private plane," announced Chester. "I'll pick Them up if They're there."

"Have you forgotten what happened to the other plane?" growled Kilgore.

Val rose. "I guess you didn't need me after all, now you have the tape from Phil. I'll just run along." She glanced at Steve Abbot. "Could you let me know, if—when you hear again?"

Chester frowned at her. "Nonsense! Sit down. I'll want to use you. And don't get all emotional, for goodness' sake. We need clear heads for this work!" He glared at her.

Val looked at him and an irrepressible smile twitched at her lips. "I'll do my best," she promised. "I'm anxious to help."

"You have, you have," he snapped. "Even with this report of Norton's, I wouldn't have moved for another week. Agents don't have to report if doing so might jeopardize their disguise. We'd have had no reason to think Norton was in danger. Your coming to Mr. Kilgore has saved us days of waiting and quite possibly saved your husband's life—if we can get in there fast enough.

"Now there are certain things I'll have to tell you, because I have a use for you—"

"Just a minute—Sir," interrupted Steve. "You can't draft an untrained woman into—"

"Please, Mr. Abbot," Val protested. "There's nothing in this world I want, so much as to get in and help."

Chester was staring intently at Steve. The big fellow turned a slow red. Chester raised his eyebrows. "That way, eh? See it doesn't impair your efficiency." He peered at Val with his pale blue eyes, then nodded satisfaction. "You aren't afraid of personal danger. Your feeling for Norton has overcome natural caution. I feel you would strike boldly. And of course, all females are unpredictable. A decided advantage if we have to deal with extraterrestrials. Do you wish to undertake the assignment?"

"Yes." Val was resolved to show no emotion before this strange little telepath. Tem Chester leaned back

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in his chair and set his fingers into a precise steeple.

"First: to brief you on significant data. About three months ago, a tourist was chased by a green light on a seldom-used private road in central Wyoming. A temporary barrier had been erected where this road joined the transcontinental highway, with a sign,

DANGEROUS
Drive at own risk
Ore Valley Mining Company

affixed to it. The wife, who wrote poetry, thought the scenery looked romantic on the company road and insisted that they drive that way.

"By early evening they were both regretting the choice. There had been no gas stations or lunch rooms, in fact, no sign of human habitation, and the road was badly pot-holed. They were getting hungry and a little worried. Just at dusk, during the time when the sky goes from pale yellow to clear green, the man glanced away from the road to see if he could locate even a sheepherder's or a miner's cabin. Instead, he saw a big green light drifting down toward a flat-topped hill to the left of the road. He called his wife's attention to it. They decided it must be a flare from a plane in trouble. As she bent across him to look, the green flare hesitated, then rose and swept over toward them.

"Our man knew that flares don't act like that, even with updrafts and freak air currents. And it was big —bigger than any flare he'd ever seen. But there was something worse. He felt panicky suddenly; as though the thing was conscious of his presence and meant him no good with that swift approach—like a watch-dog making for an intruder with silent ferocity. The feeling was so strong that he turned the car around as fast as he could, and shot off the way he'd come, not daring to take his eyes from the shadowy road to find out if the thing was still following.

"All this time his wife hadn't said a word. This bothered him, being so unlike her, but he had all he could do to keep the car on the road, which was full of pot-holes and cracks. He hit sixty anyway, he was that scared of the thing which was approaching. In a minute he heard a kind of strangled cry from his wife. He flashed a glance her way. To his horror, the green flare was just outside the window, and his wife's body was bathed in the weird green light. A violent lurch brought his eyes back to the road. When he could look again, the green flare was gone. His wife was slumped down, hands over her face. He slowed and spoke her name. She huddled close to him, body shaking. He switched on the lights, slowed down and looked behind. Nothing but the empty dark hills, remote against the wide sky. He began to feel like a fool for shying off from a flare. He tried to joke about it with his wife—but she wasn't having any. She kept

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trembling and huddling close to him.

"Now, here's where we got our first break. Normally, he'd never have mentioned the incident to anyone: Showed him up as a weak sister. But his wife was so upset he got worried, and asked a few carefully casual questions of a gas station proprietor when they got back on the main highway. That was our second break. The station owner had seen a plane come flying out of the hills from that direction just a week before. It crashed among the sagebrush near the highway. He recognized it as a small commercial job which was trying to establish a new freight route to the mines in the northern part of the state. He knew Randall, the pilot, by reputation as a steady, competent flier. He took out across the rough country with his repair jeep, and found the wreck within a few moments of the crash.

"The plane was scattered around like the contents of a woman's spilled handbag. About twenty feet from the engine lay the pilot, so badly smashed that even a layman could tell he'd never survive a trip out to the hospital. But he was still alive, and he managed to mutter three words before he died: "Green flare . . . rammed . . ."

"Our tourist decided this warranted investigation. But he didn't want to be mixed up in anything that'd get him laughed at, so he made careful notes of both experiences and put off reporting what had happened. Till a month ago. His wife died. She was the sensitive type. He believed she'd seen something more than just a green flare that night. He didn't know; she'd refused to discuss it with him. But the doctor was puzzled over the deterioration of her organs.

"The husband thought about it, and the more he thought, the angrier he got. So he wrote a letter to the Editor of a Science Fiction magazine which had been running a series of articles on Unidentified Flying Objects. He enclosed the notes he had made. The Editor turned the letter over to the Air Force and they had sense enough to see that Mr. Kilgore got it. His first idea was to discount it as the vaporings of an hysterical woman and the rambling of a dying pilot. There hadn't been a single previous report of a sighting anywhere near that area."

"Mr. Chester read my mind and decided differently," put in Kilgore. "He reminded me that mother birds deliberately show themselves *away* from the nest. We'd investigated the scene of multiple sightings and found nothing; perhaps this remote, ostensibly barren region would yield what we were looking for. Mr. Chester advised me to send an agent into the area."

"We briefed a good man—our best agent—two weeks ago and sent him in as a traveling salesman. He reported from a motel in Rawlins. He was going to canvass the whole area."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"What has he reported?" asked Val.

"That's the reason we sent Norton in. We haven't heard from Nunn since."

Steve unlocked the door of the small apartment, then went in ahead of Val. He locked the door before turning on the lights. "This is Mr. Kilgore's apartment. He asked me to bring you here for the briefing. He doesn't want you seen in the Pentagon again, or near any government agency."

"That figures," said Val, looking around for a comfortable chair. "I'll be more useful if I'm not pegged as an agent."

Steve frowned down at her. "I don't like this. Tem's got no right to involve you—"

The big brown eyes met his. "I am involved, remember? I'm Phil's wife. And if some freak from space has done him in, I want to know it."

Steve turned away abruptly and walked to a window, where he peered out between the dust-stiff drapes. Below, in the street, a few vague figures drifted past under the street lights. Then a red Jaguar pulled up in front of the entrance. Two men got out.

"Here's Tem with Mr. Kilgore."

No one spoke until Chester and Kilgore were in the apartment. Chester was in high spirits, rubbing his small dry hands together and beaming at Val with his pale eyes. Kilgore savaged a cigar, a worried frown on his face, as he watched the little telepath.

"I found Them! A whole nest of Them in the town of Ore Valley. Most interesting thought patterns—definitely alien minds. Seem to be two kinds of them. The dominant type is very arrogant, a sort of master class. "The others," he hesitated, an expression of distaste on his features, "sullen, almost sub-human. A strange emanation."

"Were the Master Class—human?" asked Steve.

"I think so. Their minds functioned in logical patterns. I'd say they knew wrong from right, in a twisted, self-centered sort of way."

"Were you observed?" Steve wanted to know.

Kilgore grunted. "Of course he was. All the way in from the airport, he whitened what hair I've got left, telling me his adventures."

"We flew once over the town, very high. Two greenish objects arced up to intercept us. I probed and found each was manned by one of the non-human entities. I entered the consciousness of one—" again a grimace of distaste—"and convinced him my plane was a guided missile, unmanned, out of control and due to crash. He sheered off while I was convincing the other. When my plane went out of sight behind the hills, we went upstairs, cut the engines and drifted back across the town. We did that till I had all the information I wanted—"

"You coasted over the town sev-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eral times after they'd sighted you?" gasped Val.

"It was night," shrugged Chester, but Steve could see he was pleased at the girl's admiration. "I probed one of the superior minds. They're very—smug." He rubbed his hands. "Interesting. Been here a long time, apparently. Got the whole town. Running it with the help of a few wretched enslaved humans, management and top technical men of the company that used to own Ore Valley. They carry on about the way the humans did, filling outstanding commitments but making no new ones. Since the ownership was local, there's no Eastern tie-up to cause embarrassment.

"The sub-humans, known as Lengs, are the servants of the Master race, but not of their race, apparently. Perhaps not even from the same planet. The man I probed had a very deeply-buried fear of the Lengs. I stimulated it. Divide and conquer." He beamed at his audience.

"Sure he didn't realize you were probing?" worried Kilgore. "I'd hate to tip them off just before we send Mrs. Norton in."

"Not Smith. That's what the leader calls himself. He's sure he's the ultimate flowering of intelligence, strength and beauty in the universe. Terribly conceited bunch. The whole race think of themselves as The Masters. There aren't many of them on Earth, but they've been here for years, apparently. And I got a flash of a thought about other similar colonies of The Masters scattered around the globe."

"So we're already invaded, in spite of all our elaborate precautions to prevent it," said Kilgore grimly.

"I don't believe there's been much harm done. They're systematically robbing the earth of minerals and something else I couldn't understand, and I'm afraid," he hesitated and frowned, "there's something about a virus they've let loose. But I'll know more about that later, when I get Mrs. Norton in there. In the meantime, there's one bright spot. Smith is homesick. For women. It seems they aren't permitted to bring their own females, and any Master who deliberately seeks out a contact with one of ours is punished by a death so horrible that Smith shied off from the thought of it. Which gives us our chance." He looked at Val appraisingly.

Steve stood up. "No."

Nobody paid any attention to him. Kilgore and Val herself had eyes only for Chester, who continued,

"I'm going to pin something on Val so she's demonstrably on the run. Some crime that strikes so deeply at the roots of human decency that every human's hand will automatically be against her. Then we're going to let her run and chase her toward Ore Valley. I think Smith is in a mood to give her sanctuary when he sees her."

"How will he know she's sup-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

posed to be a criminal on the run?"

"They've got radio and television. And Smith's lonesome."

"I think that's the wildest rotten scheme I ever heard of—" began Steve hotly.

Val interrupted, eyes on Chester. "If he's not—human, will this Smith be interested in me?"

"We got a break there. Like so many human males, he was rather preoccupied with images of the opposite sex at the time I was probing. Apparently the women of the Master Race aren't too much different from our own, with one or two exceptions. They're golden skinned, and the smallest of 'em are about six feet tall. Smith and the men are big golden giants, very handsome—they've bred out the ugly and weaklings ages ago . . ."

"Pity they bothered sneaking in, then," said Kilgore drily. "They could have appeared on television and won the world that way."

Tem Chester was staring at Val. "While the males are completely hairless, the females have a sort of golden stubble on their heads, which is naturally short or kept close-cut, I'm not sure which. Smith was purring over the thought of rubbing his palms on a plushy, one-inch brush of thick fair hair."

"Can do," said Val briskly.

Steve got up and walked to the window. Kilgore raised his eyebrows, then shrugged and took a fresh cigar.

"There are several minor differences—superficial things," Chester was telling the girl. "The women paint their ears and eyes, but not their mouths. They wear jeweled metal sheaths on their fingers. If they're like their men, they're arrogant, cruel. I got a thought from Smith that they rule their slaves through fear of extreme punishments freely applied. They call it discipline. Smith seemed to find the thought of something he knew as the light-whip, very reassuring."

"Nice people," commented Val. "When do I visit them?"

"I've got to give you some hypno-training first. And plant a booster in your skull—"

"Booster?" Kilgore asked, frowning.

"I'll want to be in constant mental touch with her while she's in Ore Valley. Flying around above them in an airplane isn't practical. I thought I'd establish a base unobtrusively, a few miles away, and listen in. So of course I'll need some sort of device to amplify her brain impulses."

"Is there such a surgical technique?"

"Probably not. But you can get the best surgeon available and I'll tell him what I want done."

Kilgore objected before Steve could speak. "I don't think we can risk such an operation on Mrs. Norton. We'll have to chance some kind of mechanical device she can put on her head—an ornamental head-band or something."

Chester grimaced with annoyance. "Quite impractical! They'd be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sure to spot it and take it away from her. They seem to have an excellent system for detecting machines. If we had time, we might experiment to discover if drugs would increase the strength of her brain impulse. But we have no time," he fretted.

Val offered a suggestion hesitantly. "There's Cobber. He's a mechanical device, but he's part of my act and easily explained. They might not think to look for a second reason for my wanting him near me . . ."

Chester scanned her mind and his face gradually lightened. "Excellent! I'm sure Mr. Kilgore's electronic wizards can build some sort of amplifying circuit into your robot snake by the time I'm ready for you to leave. I do have to find a crime for you. Something particularly nasty—"

The phone rang, sharply, three times. Chester took the call. The others listened with increasing apprehension. There was an agitated squawking from the receiver. Then Chester said

"Which one? . . . Alive? . . . Oh, dying. Well, try to keep him alive until I get there. I may be able to read something from what's left of his mind." He replaced the receiver. "They've found one of our agents."

Val was staring at him white-faced, fingers clenched on the arm of the chair. As he remained silent, thinking, Steve burst out, "Well, tell her! Is it Norton?"

Chester roused himself. "Norton? No, it's Nunn. Police picked him up last night in a ditch outside Chicago. At first they thought he was just a hobo, rotten with disease and alky. Then something about his clothing and the things he was saying, roused their suspicion and they decided he was the victim of a gang outrage. They took his prints and sent them here. He was identified a few minutes ago."

"Chicago?" frowned Kilgore. "What would he be doing there?"

"Trying to get back here, maybe," suggested Steve. "Was he injured?"

"They say his condition is peculiar," admitted Chester. "Extremely advanced degeneration of organs, some broken bones, festered flesh wounds, complete exhaustion. . . . Let's go to him at once. I must probe him before he dies."

Kilgore was already on the phone, arranging for a flight to Chicago by jet. On the way out of the building, they picked up Jones, who had been unobtrusively guarding the entrance. Chester was wrapped in thought, and the others didn't find anything to say on the way to the airport.

Nunn was a twitching, shuddering wreck. Whatever inner strength, whatever terrible urgency, had got him this far, now at last had deserted him. Looking down at the hospital bed, Kilgore swore raggedly. "If They did this to him—!"

Chester, perched on a stool near the head of the bed, was scanning

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the brain of the dying man. He glanced up with annoyance. "I wish you'd go away. Your angry thoughts distract me. This man has priceless information locked in his brain and there isn't much time left to collect it."

With a glance of pure dislike, Kilgore left the room and joined Val, Steve and Jones in the corridor.

"Nunn got away from Them all right," Kilgore told them. "And there's no doubt They interrogated him. He keeps living it over, cringing and crying. Something about the 'whips.'"

"Can we get the President's permission to drop a bomb on Them?" asked Jones. Val looked at him in surprise. It was the first time she had heard him speak, and his voice surprised her—soft and gentle where she had expected a deep-voiced rasp. Jones was a small dark compact man, with hair that grew low on his forehead and narrowed dark eyes. His lips were narrow, too, and close-set. Val decided it was the hardest face she had ever seen, but there was nothing vicious in it—just a controlled, disciplined strength.

Kilgore was considering Jones' suggestion. "I think I'd go along with that. But we've got to consult Chester. See what he finds out from Nunn."

Jones stayed outside the door, guarding Chester as always; the rest found chairs in a bleak waiting room. It was a long wait. Nunn had been a powerful man. Dawn was a sickly gray at the windows when Chester appeared at the doorway, Jones at his shoulder. Chester's face was pale—even his dark-rimmed eyes seemed drained of color. He stood staring vacantly at them as though he saw something beyond their anxious faces. Kilgore broke the silence.

"He's dead?"

Chester focused on him. "Thank God," he said. Val put her face in her hands. Steve could guess the fear that was torturing her. Phil Norton was in the power of the creatures who had destroyed Nunn. He got up and prowled restlessly. Tem Chester drew a shuddering sigh.

"We've got a lot of work to do. Let's get back to Washington."

"His people?" faltered Val.

"He had none," Kilgore said. "I've made the arrangements."

Coming out onto the street they were lashed by a cold rain, wind-driven off the lake. The skies were leaden. Val shivered and moved unconsciously closer to Steve in the big official car. "Isn't there a hell in Dante's Inferno that's cold?" she whispered.

Surprisingly, it was Jones who answered. "The seventh—lowest—" and he quoted, soft-voiced: "'Although by reason of the bitter cold . . . every trace of feeling had gone away entirely from my face. . . . It seemed to me that I could feel . . . blasts of icy wind . . . from the great bat-like wings . . .'"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

No one spoke of Nunn until they were back in Chester's apartment. Jones came in and sat near the door, gun in hand. Steve looked at Val's exhausted face and went into the kitchenette, where he proceeded very competently to make breakfast. Val opened her eyes wide at the table he spread for them: scrambled eggs, crisp bacon, muffins oozing butter, cups of fragrant coffee.

The others seemed to take it all for granted, but as they ate, Val's gaze kept returning to Steve. It wasn't so much the cooking, although it was as good a breakfast as she had ever eaten. What surprised her was the fact that he had made it with so little fuss or fanfare. Phil accepted—and expected—fulsome admiration on those rare occasions when he offered to make the coffee.

She discovered Tem Chester's quizzical gaze on her. "He's good with children and old people, too," he advised her. The others looked up, uncomprehending. Tem relented and called them to the business at hand.

"I got a lot from Nunn," he began. "The Masters use the Leng's animal sensitivity to warn them of ground or air approach. Nunn felt he'd been spotted when he drove into town. Not that there was any disturbance; place seemed like any small town drowsing through a lazy Spring afternoon, but he felt eyes watching him from every curtained window and shadowy doorway.

"He went into a cafe and was served by a golden giant of a man in immaculate white trousers and shirt. The food was very poor. That was the last he remembers until he woke up in a dark cell. It was cold and damp. He was chained to a stone floor. Nunn didn't know how long they left him there but when a light finally came, it hurt his eyes. A golden giant, could be the twin of the one in the cafe, came into the cell, attended by two hairy, dark-skinned creatures. The next bit was—rugged. His conscious memory shied away from it. I had to probe . . ."

Chester glanced at Val. "They wanted information. Nunn didn't think he had given anything away; believes he stuck to the traveling salesman story. One queer thing—He thought he heard another man—"

"Phil?" breathed Val.

Kilgore shook his head. "Nunn didn't know Norton. Most of my special agents are unknown to each other and to the regular staff. Then no one can betray the rest. So he wouldn't have recognized your husband."

"From what I read in Nunn's mind, I'm sure it wasn't Phil Norton he overheard." Chester frowned. "Nunn had been there quite awhile. They'd been using a whip of green light on him, some sort of nerve shock apparently—agonizing pain. He couldn't be too sure of what he was hearing or seeing. But he thought he heard a man

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

talking and laughing with his captors."

"Laughing?" asked Val, with a little thrill of horror.

"Nunn registered a carefree human laugh. My own idea is that it might have been one of the poor devils they've enslaved, one of the townspeople or technicians, perhaps, tortured past the limits of reason laughing insanely. The Masters seem to be a sadistic race who enjoy inflicting suffering."

"Jones suggests H-bombing them," offered Kilgore. "I'll put the proposal before the President if you agree."

"Before or after Phil Norton's brought out?" asked Steve.

There was a moment's silence. Then Chester shrugged. "There are other considerations. Blasting Ore Valley isn't going to help us find out how many other settlements there are, or where they're located. If there are more of them in North America, we have to know. Then there's that virus—how's it disseminated—what's the cure? And I'd like a closer look at those disc-shaped machines they've got. Be interesting to know what makes 'em so much faster than our stuff." He turned to Kilgore. "I'll prepare a report for the President. You can take it to him at once, while I get Mrs. Norton ready. If he—or any of you—can think of a better plan . . ." He waited, glancing from one grim face to another. Steve was grave and full of pity as his eyes rested on Val; the girl was white-faced with strain and weariness, her magnificent body slumped in a chair; Jones, darkly non-committal; Kilgore, angry yet frustrated by the logic of Chester's plan. No one had a suggestion to offer, so Chester went on:

"You may have wondered how Nunn got away. He had help . . . from inside. After one particularly prolonged session with his questioners, Nunn blanked out. When he came to, he heard someone moving near him. He tried to hold himself still to listen. Whoever was making that stealthy approach seemed to be inching closer along the floor. Nunn wondered what new sort of horror the Masters had devised. Then there was a sighing groan—in that place of darkness one didn't advertise even his pain, lest the Masters' attention be attracted—and hands began to work at one of the metal cuffs on Nunn's wrists. There was a rasp of metal against metal, dreadfully loud, an agonizing pressure, and the cuff scraped off.

"Nunn and his unseen friend huddled together in the darkness, hardly daring to breathe. Desperately Nunn tried to control the ceaseless trembling of his limbs lest the remaining chains rattle and alert their captors. After a long moment the rescuer inched across Nunn's body and began to work on the other cuff. Nunn would not have believed a human body could be so frail, so light."

"Was it human?" asked Val.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Oh, yes! As he worked, the man breathed his story against Nunn's ear. He was the former office manager of the Ore Valley Company. The Masters had written his parents back East that he had been burned to death in a fire. They even shipped a charred body back. They kept him to advise as to answering letters, both business and the little trickle of personal mail which came in. He had the freedom of the cells. They had to keep him sane so he could help them, so they didn't torture him. They only removed his legs so he couldn't run away."

Val got up and walked away from the table. She tried to light a cigarette with fingers that shook. A big steady hand brought a lighter up to meet her cigarette. "Want to go and rest awhile now?" asked Steve.

Val pulled smoke deep into her lungs. "I'm all right." She returned to her place at the table, which Kilgore was now silently clearing. She met Chester's enquiring, pale blue stare. "You make it come alive."

Chester nodded, accepting that as a tribute. He went on: "The manager got Nunn's feet loose and whispered for him to follow. They crawled in the dark through rough stone passages. Several times they heard quick, pattering footsteps, and made themselves small against the wall. But no one discovered them, and eventually Nunn's guide led him to a place that reeked evilly. It was the sewer—the only unguarded way out. Nunn made it somehow, and after a nightmare trip, found himself in a little river, more like a creek, where he splashed and floated and at dawn was far from Ore Valley.

"He stole rides on trucks at night. No one would have picked him up in his condition, and he was too afraid of the Masters to show himself. He made it to Chicago before he collapsed." Chester frowned at Val. "Are you still willing to go in?"

Val stubbed out her cigarette and gave him a steady smile. "Phil's in there. And you're going to see I have a good disguise. If things get too rough, you can always drop that bomb."

Steve started to object, thought better of it and went into the kitchenette. Kilgore set up the recorder and Chester began speaking into it. Jones sat by the door, drinking coffee. Val watched them for a moment, then wandered into the kitchenette. Steve was stacking the dishes. Val got out the dishpan and began to wash them. Steve found a towel and dried, his big hands deft with the wet china. They worked in a comfortable silence. It was an odd little domestic interlude, contrasting strangely with the dark and urgent business they were engaged in. It was a curiously satisfying experience. Val realized with surprise that she and Phil Norton had never done dishes in this relaxed intimacy—in fact, had not

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shared any domestic chores. They had had so short a time together, and that so broken. . . . To her horror she felt a tear sliding down her cheek. She brushed it away hastily, hoping Steve hadn't seen it. Chester called him, and with a little shrug and a smile he shook out the towel and hung it carefully before he went into the living room. By the time Val had things tidy in the kitchen, Steve and Kilgore were sealing up the tape in a metal case. Placing this carefully in an inside pocket, Kilgore left for the emergency interview with the President.

"And now," said Chester, "we'll get you ready to visit Ore Valley. First: your crime. I've decided what it's to be. We're lucky Nunn made it to Chicago."

Val had an unpleasant premonition. Chester, reading her mind, nodded. "Nunn would be glad to know his body was being used to trap the Masters. Now, this is the plan: You took up with a traveling salesman, robbed and murdered him. Most foully. The police will believe that you are criminally insane, a sadist. I'll see that the newspapers get lurid details—an Oriental dancer whose familiar is a venomous snake, strange jungle rites—they'll eat it up. I hope you have lots of pictures of yourself in costume."

"Cobber's not a venomous—" began Val. It was easier if she concentrated on details and didn't let the full implications of the scheme sink in.

"I know it's a robot. So does everyone who's worked with you. But by the time I'm finished, everyone will swear it was a deadly reptile. The public likes it better that way. Makes you more frightening and loathesome. You will be," proclaimed Chester smugly, "the most hated person since Jack the Ripper and the Baron de Sade. You will have to be careful you aren't torn to pieces before you reach Ore Valley."

"I'll try to avoid that," promised Val, with a twisted smile.—

"I had intended to hypno-condition you to believe that you really had murdered Nunn," said Chester, "but I see two objections. If I do it without changing your attitude toward the taking of human life, the burden of guilt might prove too terrible and your mind retreat from reality. I need you in perfect mental balance if I'm to receive accurate reports when I scan you. However, if I change your attitude so the thought of taking life doesn't disturb you, you might end up by joining forces with Smith and the Masters." He sighed. "You'll just have to pretend. I'm sorry. The hypno-conditioning would have been a protection for you in case Smith gets suspicious."

Val remembered the description of the stone-floored cells and the chains, and her flesh crawled. Jones spoke up softly. "Are you giving her a cyanide capsule?"

Chester pursed his lips. "She's no good to us, dead."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Steve growled something wordless. Chester said testily, "Don't forget I'm going to be based just beyond their range of detection. I'll go in and rescue her if necessary."

"How?" asked Steve.

"I'll tell them we'll drop a bomb on the whole town if she isn't released. Then we'll move troops in and take them prisoner."

"Why risk Val at all then? Why can't we move in right away?"

"And give them time to blow up their ships—or escape in them? I must have some idea of their weapons and the number and location of their settlements," replied Chester, too patiently. "I want to be able to hit them all at once, so one can't warn the others. After Val sends me what I want, you can deliver the ultimatum. Satisfied?"

Steve wasn't. But since Val had not voiced any objections, he was ashamed to say more. So I can't help fussing like a broody hen, he thought angrily. The woman wants to rescue her man. She's got more of what it takes than I've got. I'd better shut up and start thinking how to make this crazy deal safer for her.

It was nearly four in the afternoon before Chester had transferred all the necessary data to Val's mind. It was a meticulous briefing: every tiny hint which he had picked from the mind of Smith was faithfully transferred to Val's, even when neither of them quite understood the full implications. For instance, there was an almost reverential attitude toward the color green in Smith's mind; whenever he thought of himself or any other Master, the costume was white or silver. Then there was a quickly-suppressed image of a woman in filmy orange draperies. Color seemed to have special meaning for the Master race.

At length Chester confessed himself satisfied. "I've set a strong mental link between us. I'll have no difficulty contacting your mind now, especially with an amplifier built into your robot snake."

"But Cobber's in Los Angeles!" groaned Val.

"Not now. I'm expecting it to be delivered here within the next hour. I phoned for it yesterday. An agent's flying it out. Now, you know what to buy. Go out and get a wardrobe." He handed her a wallet. "There ought to be enough there. Be back by six o'clock."

The agent from Los Angeles arrived with Cobber in a padded box. He was followed within a few minutes by the electronics expert of the Bureau, who purred over the complicated insides of the big silvery-green reptile. He put it through its paces. The six-foot robot slithered and reared and struck in a sensuously-writhing series of movements. Steve stood frowning at it, divided between revulsion and admiration. "It'll never do," he said.

Chester and Martin, the electronics man, glared at him.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"It's too friendly-looking," he amplified.

The cobra did have an amazing suggestion of a fatuous smirk, and long, glitter-tipped eyelashes had been fixed around its jet-black eyes. These fluttered coyly at the end of the cycle of movement, presumably when acknowledging applause. The others admitted the effect was amusing rather than frightening.

Very gently Martin disconnected the extravagant lashes, and a row of superimposed pink sequins which gave the suggestion of a smile. They ran Cobber through his cycle again. This time, Steve felt only revulsion.

"I think you've got it," said Chester. "It's all snake, now. I want you to add a power-boost like the one you put inside the eyeglass frames on that Dolman case. The operative has to broadcast over a two or three mile radius."

Martin put Cobber on the dining room table and set happily to work. When he had finished, Chester offered him a cigar, and lit it for him with a flame that moved rhythmically. In two minutes Martin had forgotten what he had done and was on his way home, convinced that he'd delivered a two-way communicator to Mr. Kilgore's bodyguard.

Val returned at half-past six. Over one arm she carried a white polo coat. From a white suitcase she took a cloth-of-silver gown, a short white silk tennis dress, grecian-draped over one shoulder, and a white Italian silk suit.

"They called this an understated suit," she apologized. "That doesn't refer to the price tag. I'm afraid I spent every cent you gave me, Mr. Chester."

Steve was eyeing the garments with interest. "You're planning to make an unobtrusive getaway in these?"

"They're just bait for Smith. Show us your getaway clothes," invited Chester. He was admiring the soft texture of the silk.

Val shook her head. "I've been thinking. If I were the kind of woman who'd kill a man that way, I wouldn't creep or hide or disguise myself. I'd feel superior to ordinary law-abiding timid humans. I might be on the run, but I wouldn't skulk."

"I'll guarantee our dullest agent would pick you up in less than twenty-four hours in that outfit," said Steve, holding up the tennis dress. "Isn't this like the one that caused the rumble at Wimbledon? Wow!"

Chester frowned. "Pictures of you will be on all the wires. You won't be easy to miss if you wear these."

"I've been thinking about that, too," said Val earnestly. "Say I hire a car, a real showy one, and ask enough questions so they'll remember me, later. Then you give me twenty-four hours start before you discover the body. I'll run the car into a river or off a cliff or something, steal another car and head for Ore Valley. That should con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fuse things for awhile and yet leave a trail clear enough to find."

Steve shook his head in mock alarm. "The criminal mind at work! I almost hate to ask this, but have you ever stolen a car?"

Wide-eyed, the girl shook her head.

"It's not as easy as it looks in the movies," he advised her. "Anyway, I have a better idea. Don't steal the second car. Too many local law enforcement agents on the lookout for stolen vehicles. They'd pick you up before you got out of the state. I'd suggest you buy a car before you ditch the first one."

"Using what for money?"

"Mr. Kilgore'll give you enough for expenses and a down-payment on a new car. He's got a fund for emergencies. And why not buy a trailer while you're at it? That way, you wouldn't have to stop at motels and restaurants."

"Too hard to handle at high speeds," objected Jones. "We don't want her to end up in a ditch. But the idea's good. If she took blankets and water and food in the car, she could camp along the way."

"We can hold up the pursuit for quite a while, searching for your body after the first car's discovered," went on Steve. "The crucial time, as I see it, is that first twenty-four hours while you are in the hired car. They'll have the license number and the description—and you won't be hard to identify."

Val shrugged. "I'll have to make time, then. Drive the whole twenty-four hours. How far will that take me?"

Steve got out maps and they pored over them together, the red head close to the sandy one. Jones watched them from his post by the door. Finally Steve looked up from his figuring. "I'd say Des Moines or Sioux City. That's averaging thirty-five miles an hour for nearly nine hundred miles."

"But I can hit sixty-five or seventy," protested Val.

"You've got to stop to eat and gas up," put in Jones. "And you can't hit any seventy through towns."

"All right, say you can make Sioux City," muttered Steve. "That's on the Missouri River. Must be lots of bluffs you could run a car over, near the town. Let's find a spot," and he began to leaf through a detail map. By the time they had the place chosen, Kilgore was back from his conference with the President.

"He wants us to go ahead. He'll have three jet bombers and several vertijets ready with crews on twenty-four hour alert. He agrees with Chester that it is of utmost importance to know the strength and position of the enemy, and especially what they use to power their flying saucers. But he urges that no unreasonable risk be taken with Mrs. Norton's safety." He glanced around at them. "Are you ready?"

Chester explained about the car to be rented and abandoned. From an envelope Kilgore took a thick

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

packet of bills and gave them to Val. "From the President's emergency fund. We'll fly you to Chicago this evening. I'll give you the name of a cheap hotel where there aren't any questions asked. Then during the night Nunn's body will be brought up to your room and the stage set. You go out early in the morning, rent your car, show them your California license and be sure you give your stage name. We want to be able to 'trace' you quickly. Don't mention the hotel where you're staying; tell them you've been touring by train and decided you wanted to see more of the country. Tell them you're going South; that'll confuse the issue for awhile. Then get going.

"We'll see that the hotel discovers the body within twenty-four hours. We'll help the local authorities—I can arrange for us to be called in. Your name will be plastered all over the front pages. That'll alert the car rental agency. There should be a good description of you and the car by the evening editions."

"We figured she'd get to Sioux City within twenty-four hours, ditch the car and go on in the new one."

"I wish she didn't have to buy a car," worried Kilgore. "Has it occurred to you that we *must* lose her before she gets within guessing distance of Ore Valley? We want to pave the way for a good reception for Mrs. Norton, but we must not alarm the aliens. If we are breathing down her neck, they might consider her presence an embarrassment to them, and—take steps. I'd rather we let it be thought she died in the river."

"You're right," Chester injected impatiently. "Jones and I will pick her up after she ditches the rented car. We'll let her "steal" our car and we won't report it till she's safely hidden—"

"Or not at all," added Kilgore.

Jones was staring at Chester. "You haven't got a car."

"Get one tomorrow. In a woman's name. Get one of the F. B. I. stenographers to buy it for you—that little blue-eyed one who always perks up when you go past."

Jones shot him a startled glance. "I didn't—"

"Of course you didn't. You're always looking for prospective murderers of me. Very proper of you. But she's been watching you for rather different reasons, and she'd be glad to do you a favor. Has some sense, too. She'll keep her mouth shut. Name's Doyle."

Kilgore sighed. "Well, that settles it. Chester, Jones, head for Sioux City tomorrow morning and be waiting for Mrs. Norton at agreed contact point."

Chester turned to Steve. "No use trying to keep the office running with me and Jones away. Want a vacation, Abbot? Or would you rather come along to help?" He smiled knowingly. Steve could have smacked him.

"We'll need someone to handle

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

things at this end," objected Kilgore. "I do have a few other things to attend to myself, you know."

"This is the most important thing any of us could be working on. I want you yourself to handle things here. I may need those bombers at a moment's notice, or other things only you could requisition for me quickly."

Kilgore grunted. "I suppose you're going to be playing cloak and dagger all over Wyoming?" His sarcasm barely hid the real anxiety underlying.

"I've got to establish hidden headquarters in the area, close enough to receive Valentine's thoughts. Steve can be liaison—get a room at the nearest motel, locate the telephone office, hire a car locally. He can tell them he's going prospecting, hunting butterflies, anything to give him an excuse to come out to us daily with supplies. Besides, I may need him to deliver an ultimatum," he concluded with the knowing smile.

Val had finished repacking her suitcase. Now she shook out her thick mane of lovely red hair and held up a pair of sharp scissors. "Somebody'll have to cut this for me. Mr. Chester wants it one inch all over."

Chester waved to Steve. The big man got up, approached Val, took the scissors as though they were a deadly weapon. He was very conscious of the other men watching him. He grasped a handful of the warm, sweet-smelling, shining stuff. Then he looked at Chester. "You're not going to cut *this* off?"

"No. You are," corrected Chester.

"The Rape of the Lock," suggested Jones, and quoted, grinning:

"'Say, what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
A well-bred Lord t'assault a gentle Belle?'"

"So you read poetry," gritted Steve, snipping away grimly.

Suiting Pope's lines to Steve's actions, Jones drawled gently:

"' . . . The Baron then extends
The little engine on his fingers' ends;
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever and for ever!'"

"You want to do this?" Steve's face was dark red, as he glowered at Jones.

"Watch it, Barber! Mr. Chester said they painted their ears, not mutilated them!"

Steve moved around the girl till his back was to Jones and went on cutting. After a few moments a gleaming pile lay on a towel on the table. Steve placed the scissors carefully beside it. He didn't look at Val's face. "I'm—sorry."

Val shrugged. "It'll grow again." She looked oddly provocative with the short velvety brush of red over her well-shaped skull. "I'll hide this under a turban, then I'll be ready to leave." She wound a dark

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

green scarf around her head. She picked up Cobber's box. Kilgore took the suitcase. "Meet you in Sioux City," she said with a little smile. The door closed quietly.

Three days later. Noon.

Val stood just inside the closed flap of a camouflaged tent. Chester peered up at her anxiously.

"You know what you're to do?"

"Move in on the town—demand to see the management—move in on the management," Val said cheerfully.

Steve snarled, "This is crazy. Like throwing a kitten into a cageful of lions."

"I've handled stagemanagers. I even cooled off a psycho with a bread knife who thought he had a call to rid the world of Jezebel—which was me."

Steve rounded on Chester. "You probed those Things. You know what you're sending her into—!"

"She loves Phil Norton. If she doesn't make this effort to get him out, something inside her will wither. She'll be no use to herself or anybody else."

Steve caught Val's shoulders and glared into the brown eyes which were level with his own. "If you're in danger—holler! Send out a mental blast that'll make Chester's head split! You hear me?"

"I'll holler," said Val meekly.

Steve glared at her a moment longer, then stamped out of the tent. Val and Chester followed. Jones was standing outside the tent, gun in hand as usual. He followed Val and Chester to the big cream convertible. Chester shook hands formally and hurried back to the tent to test the short wave to Washington that Steve was setting up.

Jones helped Val into the car. He had taken off his coat and the straps of his shoulder holster crossed an immaculate white shirt. His dark hair hung over his forehead. He held out a small, blued-metal gun. "Keep this on you," he said quietly.

"Where?" asked Val.

He looked her over helplessly, touched his shoulder holster, shook his head. "Garter?"

"I'll find a place," promised Val. "And—thank you."

"It's got six shots in it. You know how to use it?"

When she shook her head, he showed her, painstakingly. As she put the gun in her purse, he asked, not looking at her, "Is Mr. Chester right when he says you have to do this?"

Val nodded slowly. "He—knows what's in my mind."

Jones said, "Don't feel bad. He scans all of us, knows all our secrets, but they don't touch him in here." He tapped his chest. "And he doesn't pass judgment. It's all academic with Mr. Chester—"

"I don't mind at all," Val reassured him. "I'm not ashamed of my thoughts."

The narrow black gaze moved over her face slowly, like a caress.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

" 'She walks in beauty, like the night—' " he whispered, '—A heart whose love is innocent.' " He walked away toward the tent.

Val stared after his small, compact figure till it disappeared inside the tent. Then she started the car and drove slowly across the sandy earth to the private road of the Ore Valley Mining Company.

The hard black shadows of afternoon had melted into the blue and gray and purple haze of dusk when the big cream convertible drew off the road, just under the edge of the final hill. Beyond lay Ore Valley, the golden Masters, cruel and beautiful, the alien Lengs—and Phil. The tall woman sat very still, listening to the nameless small rustlings of that desolate, brush-covered land. No birds sang. She had not seen a prairie dog since she left the main highway, but several times lizards and snakes had slipped off the road as the car flashed by. After a long moment she dropped her hands from the wheel, took the robot snake from his box and draped his topaz and emerald length over her shoulders and the mechanism, triggered by the warmth of her body, set the jeweled evil head to weaving nervously. Then she reached out mentally for Artemus Chester.

"I'm just ready to go over the hill into Ore Valley," she thought at him. "I've seen no one since I entered the private road, but I have a feeling I'm being observed. No green flares in sight. No U. F. O. I'll keep Cobber on my shoulders as long as I can . . . Wish me luck!"

As she leaned forward to switch on the ignition, she caught a hint of movement at the edge of her vision. Continuing deliberately to start the engine, she glanced sideways, searching the shadowy brush. Yes, surely that was a crouching figure peering at her. She put the car slowly into motion, and drove slowly over the hill. Below her in a wide, flat valley, ringed with hills and thrusting buttes, sprawled the little town—village, rather—of Ore Valley. The road, which was in disrepair, hairpinned down the hill. Val got the impression that the few lights, winking here and there among the lonely little rows of company houses, had been turned on just as she came into the valley —for her special benefit, as it were.

She was about halfway down the hill when a luminous green globe shot overhead and down toward the town. She braked to watch it. It seemed to have come from the point where she had noticed the crouching figure. "Hurrying home to get a reception ready," she thought, and released the brakes. When she could take her eyes from the broken, twisting road, she caught glimpses of the small town set so incongruously among the barren hills: the few rows of tiny grayish houses with neglected yards and broken picket fences; an oasis of green which probably indicated a park-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

like town square, and the looming bulk of a white building beyond the park. It was the only large structure in the place and seemed to dominate the town. Val decided to make for that building—if she were allowed to get so far. She realized suddenly that Phil was probably a prisoner in a stone cell somewhere under one of the buildings . . . warm-fleshed, laughing Phil with the conspiratorial smile that set the blood tingling in her veins. . . .

Firmly she put aside such thoughts. Not that she minded Chester reading them. Val wasn't ashamed of her feeling for Phil. It was only that, if Phil were to be rescued, she mustn't dull her perceptions of Ore Valley with emotion.

Now she was down off the hill and approaching the town. The road led past some warehouses, closed, a huge covered truck and some raised storage tanks. Val thought at Chester: "I'd feel something was screwy here even without knowing about our friends. I have not seen a living thing, not even a dog or a cat. And I don't hear any of the usual noises. It could be a ghost town, only it's too tidy. Unless ghosts are good housekeepers—?" She caught herself up. Emotion suppressed one way tended to erupt in another. Chester had told her to look about her carefully, note every detail which might be of help to him, vocalize her impressions mentally so he could get a complete picture. So now she thought at him: I feel as though I were going onto an empty stage before a very critical audience. I can see no one, but I know they're there. I think I've got stage fright."

In a surge of nervous excitement, Val sounded the horn. It echoed oddly among the silent buildings. And then she was out onto the street which led around the little public park, a square faced with a few small stores, a darkened movie theater, a cafe or two, and facing her across the tops of the trees, the white building she had seen from the hill. It looked like a hotel.

As though her blowing of the horn had been a signal, the lights began to come on in some of the stores. It could have been the usual time for lighting up; somehow, Val doubted that. And she caught her first sight of people—two jeans-clad figures who came out of a cafe and got into an old car. As she drove past them on her way around the square toward the hotel, she tried to make out their features in the gloom. All she got, in the light reflected from the cafe beyond them, was a shadowy impression of swarthy skins and dark hair. Well, why not? Miners were traditionally grimy of skin. Or was that the kind of mining they did in Ore Valley?

Val turned to go along the north side of the square. Another car was sliding along in front of her, nearly at the next corner. She wondered where it had come from. Had it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been parked just beyond the corner, spying? Her nerves jerked and her muscles tightened sickeningly as a green glare lit up the sky in front of the white building. Then she was at the corner and turning, and the white building loomed above her . . . and the green glare was a sign prosaically stating HOTEL in letters several feet high.

Val drove up and parked beyond the hotel entrance. She sounded the horn again, waited, and when no bell-boy emerged to take her suitcase, she put Cobber back in his box, took it over her arm and went into the hotel.

The first thing she noticed was that the hotel smelled wrong. She'd stopped overnight in plenty of small-town hotels when she had her act on the road. They smelled of stale cooking, beer, tarnished brass and old cloth, cigars and cheap perfume. This one wasn't stale or sour or dirty, just wrong. Inhuman. There was the usual assortment of dusty potted plants, the imitation marble floor, the sagging leather furniture, the limp scatter rugs. It was almost too typical, like a stage set. And it was empty.

Val walked over to the long wooden counter and was startled to see a swarthy youth slouching on his elbows, peering at her from behind a rack of dusty post cards.

"I'd like a room," she said.

"Lost your way?" asked the clerk with a toothy grin. His small black eyes were flat and lustreless. His skin glistened with an oily film.

"A room with bath and supper," Val repeated coldly.

"Grill's closed. All rooms reserved." The clerk's speech was singsong, slurred. His insolence was no greater than she had often met in similar situations, but Val felt her skin crawling. Was this one of the Lengs, sub-human servants of the Master race? She put Cobber's box on the desk and got a five dollar bill from her purse. No telling who was observing her. Whatever happened, she must keep her own behavior normal and above suspicion. She pushed the money across the desk.

"I'm sure you could manage to find a room somewhere—"

With dismay she noted the increasing arrogance in the clerk's manner. He took the bill, looked at it, then flicked it back with a grayish-yellow, horny fingernail. "Grill closed. All rooms reserved," he repeated, and his manner was an insult.

Val took her courage in her hands—literally. She picked up the small guest register, closed it and threw it into his face. Then in a voice of controlled fury she said, "Get me a room!"

Whatever he might have answered, she never knew, for a buzzer sounded below desk level. His snarl gradually slackened as he listened. Then he bent his shoulders ingratiatingly and said, "Will sign book, yes? Then room." He picked up the guest register from the floor, opened it and handed it to her. The ink

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was dried in the desk pen, but she used one from her own purse. As she signed, she was aware that his long nails were rasping across the welt the book had made on his cheek.

He closed the book without looking at it, took a key from the rack and gave it to her. "Maybe food later."

"My suitcase?" asked Val.

He shrugged, grinning with a mirthless show of yellowed teeth. "Everybody at circus," he jerked a thumb at a faded poster on the wall.

It was useless to argue. Val went out and got her suitcase from the car. She left the car closed but not locked in case someone wanted to check on her license, and returned through the lobby. The stooping clerk was still there, and his eyes followed her as she walked across the lobby and up the stairs. Cobber's box and her purse and key in one hand, the suitcase in the other, she mounted the wooden stairway as quickly as she could, conscious every moment of that hard black stare.

In the first floor corridor the alien smell was strong. It had a chemical bite. All the doors were closed, no light showed under any of them. The long dingy hall was lit by a single bulb above the head of the staircase and a red fire-escape globe at the far end. Val put down her suitcase and looked at the key. The numeral was thirteen. With a performer's ingrained superstition, Val's heart sank at the sight of the unlucky number. Then she looked at the door nearest her. It was number one. Was room thirteen the last one down that long narrow hallway, near the ominous red light? Val picked up her suitcase and walked down the hall.

Thirteen was the last room, its door lurid in the light from the red globe. Inside, however, it was ordinary enough. The floor looked fairly clean and the bed comfortable. Val turned back the cover and appraised the sheets. They were clean and smelled heavily of the chemical. Val locked the door and unpacked her clothing quickly. She found herself stopping often to listen. Once she even went to the door and pressed her ear against it. Then she checked the lock, put the snake-amplifier on and thought over her impressions of the town and the hotel. When she was sure Tem Chester had had a chance to pick her mind clean of detail, she put Cobber away and took a hurried shower, unwilling to be caught at it—by whom? She didn't know. After all, the door was locked.

As she showered, she thought about Phil. Was he somewhere beneath this building, in a wet black crypt? How best could she help him? Her impulse was to take the small deadly gun Jones had given her at the field camp, ignore Chester's instructions, and go down into the cellars at once, looking for Phil, blasting into red death anyone who tried to halt her. . . . Val switched on the cold water and let its icy blast clear away the emotional

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thinking. Such action as she had imagined would be completely out of the character which Chester had so painstakingly established for her. A vicious, sadistic killer would certainly not try to release one of the prisoners *about whom she knew nothing*. . . .

The shock of remembering that was as salutary as the icy water. She must be careful not to betray the whole plan by revealing knowledge she wasn't supposed to have. As she dressed, she knew she must follow Chester's advice. Phil's rescue would have to wait until she was accepted as a guest by Smith and had some freedom of movement. Quickly she slipped into the white suit and dark green pumps. With indelible lipstick she outlined the ridges of her ears, covering the lobe with delicate color. The short red-gold fuzz made a nimbus of light around her head, but she covered it with the dark green jersey, turban-wise. Then she draped Cobber over her shoulders and sauntered down into the lobby, a magnificent woman superbly dressed, too striking to remain unnoticed even without the weird neck-piece she flaunted.

The lobby was deserted. She went out to the sidewalk in front of the hotel. Her car was gone. She looked up and down the empty street. The only light came from the hotel sign. The hotel itself apparently took up only one end of the building. The rest was divided into offices for the Ore Valley Mining Company, a company store and a post office—all closed and dark.

Val shrugged and listened for the night sounds of the town. Almost at once she became aware of a strange hoarse shouting at a distance. It had almost the sound of chanting. The voices were deep and ragged. There was a momentary lull in the chant; then the night was split by a shriek which rose and rose into a shrill of agony. . . . Val clapped her hands over her ears. Above the trees pulsed a green glow. The screaming stopped as two balls of green flame shot into the sky in a widening v.

Val's hands dropped to her sides. At her shoulder a familiar slurred voice said, "My people catch spy. Fix good. You go see?"

Val shook her head. "Get me food."

"Good food at cafe, across square," the clerk said. "You go through park?"

Val looked across the street at the narrow pathway which led through the park to the lighted area at the far side. Many of the trees were dead; all of them were draped in grayish clinging strands like the filament from giant spiders. Surely it was too far north for Spanish moss? Her mind tried to fit the alien appearance into a familiar pattern. Between the shrouded trees the green light from the opposite side of the square cast a sickly glow. Against it, Val noticed one, then several dark shapes moving through the trees toward her.

She was conscious of the clerk

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

breathing heavily at her shoulder, like an overeager dog on the trail of something. She had a strong feeling that if she showed the slightest trace of fear, the hulking creature would be on her shoulders like a beast of prey. Val stood taller and turned her graceful dancer's body to face him.

"Get my car," she snapped.

"Boss—Mr. Smith—said put in company garage. Not safe on street at night."

As if to underline his remark, the dark forms coming across the park drew closer, a skulking wolf-pack closing in. They hovered at the very edge of the shrouded wood, silent, menacing. With an effort of will Val directed her gaze away from them and locked it on the black inhuman eyes of the clerk. He shifted nervously, as a dog will when you stare at it.

"Take me to this Mr. Smith at once. I demand to see him."

She had been able to get around the provision or law or taboo or whatever it was, that kept the Masters from seeking out human females. Chester should be pleased. She strode into the lobby after the clerk, who scuttled on ahead, grinning over his shoulder. "Want to see Boss. Very good. Follow Leng."

At the head of the stairs he held open a heavy, unmarked door. Val went through into a small hallway. The door closed behind her with a disconcerting thud. A yellow light grew and filled the hall with almost a tangible vapor, a diffused brightness. With it was the acrid odor Val had noticed in the lobby and the bedroom. She stood very still, one hand seeking Cobber's scales for reassurance. This was the moment Chester had been waiting for —the first direct contact with the Commander of the Invasion Forces. With Phil's captor, prodded her heart. She shook her head. There must be no emotion. She was Chester's eyes and ears, his spy in the enemy camp. Her perceptions must be sharp, uncluttered by personal fears or hopes. Smith's brain emanations must be amplified, too, she remembered, and surreptitiously turned up the volume disk under Cobber's hooded, vicious head.

A panel slid aside in the wall facing her, and a clear high-pitched, arrogant voice rang out. "You have asked to be brought to me. What do you want?"

Val stepped forward into a large room filled with the golden light-haze.

On a raised circular platform sat a shining golden figure, buddha-like. He was a giant, smooth-muscled and magnificently built, his well shaped head completely hairless. The handsome features were set in a scornful impassivity. Had it not been for his amber, heavy-lidded eyes, slit-pupilled like a cat's, Val might have thought him a larger than life golden statue of some forgotten deity. But the eyes burned hotly on her and the chiselled golden lips opened as Smith, indicating the guest register, warned

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her, "Don't bother to lie to me. I know you are Valentine Edmonds, known as Valti, the dancer."

There was neither mercy nor humankindness in the face that confronted her. Centuries of inbreeding, the exaltation of pride and cruelty, had gone into the forming of those perfect, inhuman features. Val knew she must take a strong line or go under. But it wasn't a new battle to the girl. She'd fought cruelty and treachery and lust many times before, in her effort to establish herself as a dancer.

"How do you know my name?" she challenged coldly.

"The police of this country are broadcasting it, with your description and an account of your recent activities." His English was flawless, unaccented. His lips parted in a sneering smile. "You seem to have offended their sensibilities. I am surprised you got this far."

Val came closer as he spoke. There was a sudden stirring at the base of the platform. A Leng larger than any she had seen glared up at her with flat black eyes. Around his neck was a wide golden collar. A harness of metal and leather, ornamented with jewels, adorned the hairy body. Val experienced a vague disturbing feeling that she had seen that flat black gaze and the shock of unruly dark hair somewhere before. However, she ignored the Leng's threatening movement and came closer to the golden giant.

"So you know who I am and why I am running away from these fools. Do you intend to turn me over to the police?"

"I haven't decided what to do with you. When your arrival was observed, some of my—associates felt you represented a possible danger, that the police might pursue you here. However, the latest telecast announced that you had drowned in the Missouri river."

"I thought company towns had their own guard system. What are you afraid of?"

Smith looked at her sharply but didn't pursue the subject. Instead, he indicated Cobber's sinuous form. "Isn't that rather an odd ornament for a woman?"

Val shrugged her shoulders. "Cobber's my trademark, like Charlie McCarthy for Bergen. I never let him out of my sight."

"Let me see it," Smith extended a narrow golden hand.

Val ignored it, shaking her head with a slow smile. "No one ever handles him but me."

Smith's hand flicked ever so slightly and the crouching Leng began to rise. Val pretended not to notice the gesture, continuing calmly, "He's a robot with circuits set to perform with me when I dance. Careless handling could disorganize his mechanism. It would be too bad to spoil my dance—don't you think?" She swayed her body, a mere sketch of movement, infinitely provocative.

Smith leaned slightly toward her. "I'd have to see you dance, before I could answer that." His gesture

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

arrested the Leng in mid-movement. The creature sank back to the floor, baring his fangs and snarling at Val. The girl lifted one thin-pencilled eyebrow.

"Your pet isn't as manageable as mine."

"You aren't afraid of Lengs?"

"Why should I be? I have one of my own—" Val paused, shaken. Where had that lie come from? Then before her memory rose the image of Jones, that small dark hairy literate man, as he had stood before her pressing the gun into her reluctant hands. The flat, narrow-lidded black eyes, the shaggy hair dark over the low forehead—that was why the Lengs had seemed familiar! *Forgive me, Jones,* she pleaded silently. *The very thought of you is strength to me!* Smith hadn't missed her start of apprehension. He misinterpreted it. "If you have a Leng, you've no cause to fear admitting it to me!" His curious eyes were on her, probing eagerly. "Who are you? Where were you born?"

"I don't know," Val answered honestly. "I was left on the steps of an orphanage in Los Angeles and adopted by a family who brought me up as their daughter."

"Take off that scarf!" commanded Smith. Val removed the turban. Smith leaned forward, amber eyes widening as he saw the red-gold stubble and the painted ears. He addressed Val in a clipped singsong language. When he had finished, Val said coldly,

"I speak only English."

Smith rose in one lithe movement and stepped down from the dais. "The first colony established on Earth by the Masters, after years of surveillance of the planet and the taking of specimens to study the language and customs, was in a desert near the western sea-coast of this continent. That colony was lost—we never found out what happened to them. The next group to arrive found nothing but a few broken walls and a wrecked globe. It was then that Planning Control decided to take over small, established but isolated communities and impersonate their inhabitants. Such a procedure, naturally, would necessitate a much slower progress; our two-year estimate had to be revised to a ten-year plan of conquest.

"But this is all beside the point. You, your hair, your size, even your painted ears—you might be one of us. Perhaps a child of that first, lost group—" He stood in front of her, the strange eyes smoky, nostrils flaring. Tentatively he placed his golden hands on her shoulders. She looked up at him, meeting his searching scrutiny boldly. He turned her head slightly with cold, strong fingers. "What is your ear paint saying? I do not recognize the pattern."

Val's chin tingled under the cold pressure of his fingers. "I don't know why I paint my ears. Just a gimmick to make me different. Other women don't—"

"Our women do!" whispered

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Smith. His hands slipped down her shoulders and pressed her body against his in an embrace which was not like anything she had ever experienced. It awoke such a flaming response in her that she cried out and pushed him from her.

"I do not please you?" Golden, arrogant, male, he towered above her.

"Remember Phil! This is your chance to save him," shouted a tiny voice deep inside her mind. "Don't antagonize this man. Play for time." Was it her own common sense speaking—or Chester? Val drew a steadying breath and resettled Cobber on her shoulders. She smiled provocatively.

"You are—overwhelming," she acknowledged truthfully. "But you must remember that I have lived my life not knowing of—your people—"

"Our people," insisted Smith. "You came to us when your life was in danger. Perhaps buried deep in your consciousness is a race-memory of the Seven Colonies. Such things are for the Mentators. We of the Landing Teams know little of these matters."

"But why should I head for this Colony?" ventured Val, hoping to keep him on the subject so Chester might pick up pertinent information.

Smith shrugged wide golden shoulders. "Possibly because it was the closest to you. The Andean and Canadian colonies would require border-crossing formalities. The other three bases, of course, are too far—" Noting her intent gaze, he hesitated, the habit of ten years of secrecy very strong.

Val smiled, stretching lazily with a trained grace which made every movement attractive. "I'm glad it was your colony," she said.

He didn't offer to touch her again, but his smoky amber eyes were avid on her face and body. "It's been so long," he said. "But you are right to draw back. Quick mindless matings are for animals like the Leng. For the Masters, the rites of Krydome. We would not disgrace a culture which has flourished for twice ten thousand years!"

"I have forgotten—if I ever knew," whispered Val, hoping he would continue to talk so Chester could learn more about the enemy he had to meet.

"I will instruct you. Perhaps there will be a recall, as when you painted your ears, not remembering that it was the way of our women. And you have become a dancer among these Earthmen; perhaps the racial memory of the Three Ritual Dances refused to be lost. It will be interesting for us to discover how much you can bring back. But first we must have a feast and you shall meet the others. Then you may dance before us—but for me alone!" His voice hardened. "I am the Ryn, the Master of these Masters. Look not with invitation upon any of my companions."

"Perhaps the others won't accept me," said Val. "They may vote to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

kill me or send me to the pits." She had to know about the underground prison. It might even be possible to make a tour of it. If the Masters were sadists, what more likely than that Smith would offer to show her his victims? But the golden giant was frowning.

"Vote? You have been corrupted by your associations. Ryn's word is law, save for the Code of Behavior. If I choose you, who would dare question? No. They will look upon you with desire and wait for the Day of Reversion."

Val didn't like the sound of that, nor of the laugh that accompanied it, but she reminded herself that within the next twenty-four hours at most, she would have found Phil and Chester would have some way to get them out. Bemused by these conflicting emotions, she became aware of Smith's hand on her hair, his palm gently moving back and forth against the velvety stubble. The look on his face shocked her —the beautiful features were twisted into a mask of passionate desire. She stepped smoothly back as though she had not noticed his hand, then dropped her head over palm-touching hands in an Oriental gesture of respect.

"May I go, Smith? If there's going to be a feast and dancing, I'd better get ready." She didn't raise her head, giving him time to recover from the passion which had possessed him. After a moment his voice came, heavy with restraint.

"You have leave to go, Valti. I shall appoint a Leng to guard you until your own Leng finds you. But do not call me Smith. I would hear my own name from your lips before we part . . . Samith Rhu."

"Samith Rhu," said Val obediently. When she glanced up he had gone, and his servant with him. The panel behind her opened, revealing a small Leng in a golden collar. He led the way back to room thirteen, and would have followed her into the room, had she not pointed to the floor outside the door. He crouched obediently, black eyes on her face.

Closing and locking the door, Val leaned against it, hands to her face, shivering uncontrollably in the dark. Gradually she became aware of two sounds. The first and clearest was a minor, eerie wailing, like a dozen coyotes muted by distance and the walls of the building. The other sound was closer. Someone was breathing within the room. Val froze. Then very carefully she lowered her hands from her face, turned her head to locate the source of the sound.

"Don't shoot," whispered Steve Abbot. "I'm too weak to defend myself."

Mingled with a rush of relief, Val felt an irrational anger at Steve's flippancy. He was whispering again:

"Chester had a bright idea. He gimmicked up a parachute to look like one of their green globes, and had me dropped from a glider. We figured they wouldn't notice one

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more green globe tonight—the air's full of them." So lightly he dismissed landing in the heart of alien territory. "I hit dirt back on the hill. It took me this long to get to the hotel and up the fire escape. Chester told me you were in room thirteen. I just came right in and made myself at home." Val moved toward him in the darkness, clutching at him with hands that trembled in spite of her. His arms went around her, steady and reassuring. "Chester's tickled pink," he whispered in her ear. "You're coming through clear as a bell and so's Smith. There seems to be something big going on—a gathering of the clans—and all isn't sweetness and light. Leng are getting out of hand, for one thing—not only here, but in some of the other colonies. But the big deal seems to be," and his voice held very steady, "that a very large force of the Masters are due to arrive within a short time."

"Invasion!" breathed the girl.

"Looks like it. So you see how valuable you are, right here in the heart of the enemy camp."

Steve was talking to give her a chance to pull herself together, Val realized. She pushed gently out of his arms, crept across to listen at the hall door. There was no sound. Was the Leng there, separated from her by the thin wood, listening, sensing the presence of Steve within the room? Had he already gone to warn Samith? Val guided Steve inside the bathroom and closed the door.

"There's a Leng on guard outside in the hall." She switched on the light. "Samith Rhu—that's Smith—is putting on a dinner for his pals and I'm the floor show. I've got to get ready. You can look the other way."

"I'm good at hooking up and zippers. Had two older sisters," whispered Steve, grinning. In the light, Val noticed that one side of his face was scraped raw and his coverall was ripped from wrist to shoulder. "Clumsy landing," he answered her worried look. "I slopped when I should have slipped."

It wasn't very funny, but Val found herself convulsed with laughter which had to be kept silent. Shaking, she motioned him back into a corner and then went out of the bathroom and turned on the bedroom light. On the bed her suitcase lay open. She took out the silver gown and the brief wisps of nylon that went under it. She hurried into them and stood regarding herself in the bureau mirror. Quickly she cleansed her face and neck with cream, removing all make-up and the thin line of eyebrows she had drawn. She covered all exposed skin areas with the dark foundation she used in her act. Then with hands that trembled, she painted her eyes. She had just picked up a lipstick to do her ears when there was a scratching at the door. The tube dropped from her fingers.

"Who—what is it?"

"Will Mistress come? Feast is ready and Ryn commands." It was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the voice of the room clerk, speaking with a new show of deference.

"Just a few minutes." Val held her voice steady.

"Ryn does not like wait," warned the clerk. The two within the room heard him exchange a few gutturals with the Leng outside the door, then there was silence. Steve had entered the bedroom at the first sound of voices. Now he slid a silenced gun back into his jacket and retrieved the lipstick from the floor. He took Val's chin in his hands, studied her ears and began carefully to outline them. Val stood very still, conscious of the warmth of his fingers. After a moment, he stood back, regarded the effect critically and nodded approval. Val slipped chiming bangles on her wrists and bent to clasp the rings of little silver bells around her ankles. Steve took them from her, knelt and adjusted them with big warm hands. He looked up as she was settling the cobra around her shoulders.

"You're—terrific," he whispered. She looked like some heathen priestess, except for the wide brown eyes that clung to his, frightened, yet steady. "Have you got Jones' gun?"

She nodded. "Taped above my knee. What does Chester want me to do?"

"Just carry on as you planned. He's got the whole Air Force alerted. There's a bomber at a field just fifteen minutes from here, as the jets fly. He still wants to know all you can find out about the other alien bases and the power source for the globes, but the main thing now is the invasion. Get Smith talking and thinking about that if you can. Have you found out anything about Phil?"

Val shook her head miserably.

"I'll snoop around a little while you're reveling with the Master Race," Steve whispered. "If I can find Norton, I'll try to get him up to the roof. In any case, I'll come back here and wait for you. We can figure something out."

"I thought I'd get Smith to show me the prisoners," said Val. "If I can locate Phil, I could go back later, after the party—"

Steve shook his head. "You concentrate on Golden Boy. That's the job only you can do. Leave Phil to me. I promise you I will not leave without him." He smiled suddenly. "It's my job to get both of you off in a vertijet before the fun starts."

"While you stay behind to cover the retreat," thought Val. "Oh, Phil, be grateful! We're on a good team!"

Again the scratching on the door, this time peremptory. "Master says come!"

Steve took Val in his arms and set his lips gently on her pale ones. "This is from Phil," he whispered. "Good luck, brave heart!"

Val motioned him back into the bathroom. Taking an orange and gold sari from the suitcase, she veiled herself from head to instep.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Then she opened the door and went out.

The room to which the Leng conducted Val may once have been the hotel dining-room. It was filled with the golden vapor, and walls, ceiling and floor were covered with a shining yellow mirrorlike metal. The effect was to make the twenty Masters who sat on raised platforms, look like a vast company. They were robed in brief white kilts, and heavily jeweled, except for Samith Rhu, who wore a silver kilt and no ornament but an ornate dagger.

Val did not hesitate at the door. She strode proudly across the gleaming floor to stand in front of Samith Rhu. Every gesture would be scrutinized by twenty pairs of hostile eyes, she knew; every word would be weighed. While she was posturing before these impassive aliens, Steve would be creeping through the dank corridors below in search of Phil. Val flung up her arms in a gesture of infinite grace. The sari floated to the floor behind her.

There was a hiss of breath indrawn by the watching Masters. Val sank in languorous obeisance before Samith Rhu.

The high arrogant voice rang out. "Is she not worthy? Look upon her, cousins, and my honored guest. Look upon the chosen of Samith Rhu!"

"You know the penalty for taking an Earthwoman," challenged a cold-voiced giant on Samith's right hand. The Ryn frowned.

"You are my honored guest and cousin, Ryn Drogu. Look again. Do you call her Earthwoman, with that stature and that hair and ear-paint?

"She is not golden of skin like our women. And the hair and ear-paint could be copied."

"Copied from whom? Has one of our women ever been on this accursed planet within your knowledge?" demanded Samith Rhu. "Have we even so much as a single picture to comfort our exile? How then can they copy something they could not possibly know of?" He glared at the visiting Ryn. If Drogu were not his superior, the Leader of the whole Preparatory Force, he would have. . . .

Ryn Drogu was regarding him between classically narrowed lids. "Does the woman speak The Tongue, or does she grunt and mutter like the Lengs and Earthmen? If she is one of us, let her tell us how she got here. I myself would apply for the Reversion."

There was a murmur of agreement and appreciation. Samith Rhu glared. "She is a remnant of the Lost Colony. Some one of the first comers must have mated with an Earthwoman. When the child was delivered, perchance the Scanners discovered the flouting of the Code of Behavior and the Colony was destroyed, save for the infant which was rescued by passing Earthmen—"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ryn Drogu shook his head scornfully. "This is a fantasy worthy of a Fourth Era Talespinner. But had it the authority of a pronouncement of Krydo—on whom be The Light—still it would not make this female a true Krydomena. She is not worthy to be thy Chosen. Since you did not seek her out, no blame attaches to you—yet."

"She is a pollution of the Pure Blood," muttered one of the other Masters. "I say, Kill her!"

Samith Rhu's sleek golden head swerved around, snake-like, the light gliding its slanted planes. Glad of a chance to vent the anger he could not release against Drogu, he shrilled, "Who challenges a decision of his Ryn?"

There was a sudden silence. The objector stirred uneasily on his platform. "The exile has been long," he ventured. "Now we are so close to the appointed time. . . . I fear for the success of our venture on this planet."

"The ships come when the planet completes another seven of its days. Our installations are made, the landing sites are prepared, the gas is ready for release into the atmosphere. What harm can a single female, whether mutant or earthling, do us now? If I wish to keep her to lighten the tedium of the final hours before the conquest, who is to say no?" He glared from one to the other. No one spoke. Smugly he turned to Drogu. "Shall the woman dance for us tonight, Cousin?"

Ryn Drogu nodded approvingly, his eyes on the girl.

From consort back to the chorus in one easy step, thought Val wryly. That was a quick recovery on Samith's part. He gets to eat his cheese cake and have it too. Oh, well, I probably wouldn't have enjoyed being a Ryness. But as the white-gloved, kilted Lengs began to serve the feast on golden platters, she found herself shivering. Whatever protection Samith's interest in her might have afforded her, was wiped out now. She hoped Chester had got all the details on the invasion.

The Masters were eating now, calling back and forth with high-pitched jests from dais to dais. Samith Rhu beckoned her to sit beside him on his platform. "You have my permission to eat." With a pair of slender, jeweled sticks, one hooked, one razor-edged, he cut her portions from a smoking roast and offered them on little boats of pastry. Though it was many hours since she had eaten, she found herself unable to swallow more than a few bites. Samith questioned her.

"I seldom eat before I dance," she explained. "Perhaps after—"

He looked at her possessively. "Better eat now. You will be too much occupied later."

Maybe more—and differently—than you think, Buster, the girl thought; and smiling, ate a compote of strangely-spiced fruit. A group of Lengs were beating upon small

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

drums and striking silver tubes in a hypnotic rhythm. The high-pitched arrogant voices of the Masters rang out as they drained the golden goblets brought in by gloved Lengs. Samith Rhu drank deeply of his but did not offer it to Val.

There fell a lull in the voices, one of those quiet moments which occurs in any gathering; and into the momentary stillness sounded faintly an eerie wailing. Ryn Drogu frowned. "Your Lengs are noisy."

"The imminence of the conquest excites them," shrugged Samith. "They need another blood-spectacle —or some discipline." He addressed his personal servant, crouched at the base of the dais. "What folly possesses your people?"

"The presence of the female troubles them, Master," growled the Leng. "They think of own women and the young, left long ago so far across the gulf of space—"

"Tell them to be silent, or we shall give them something else to think of. Have they so soon forgotten the whips?"

Val held out her hands. "What is it?" asked Samith.

"Let us have all the prisoners up from the pits. Then when I have danced, let us kill all of them, so men and Lengs will know the power of the Masters."

If I can get them up here, she thought, they'll have more chance than spreadeagled in the cells. And I'll get Phil away, somehow. . . .

The Masters were applauding her suggestion. Samith Rhu nodded. "The renegade Earthman can handle any message which may come through in the little time before our ships arrive." He clapped his hands. "Bring up all prisoners!"

Val knew she would have to keep an impassive face when the prisoners arrived, no matter how Phil looked. The slightest show of pity or protest would wreck her carefully devloped masquerade. She stroked Cobber and set him weaving to distract her own attention as much as Samith Rhu's. The Master was bending toward her.

"Now you must dance for us, Valti. What is the ritual?"

"I will do a dance of Death," said Val, slowly. "When the captives are here and ranged before us, let the lights be dimmed so nothing will distract my lord from watching me." *And the prisoners may have a better chance to start something or to get away in the darkness.*

The Ryn laughed thickly and ran his palm in a furtive caress over the red-gold stubble. "I promise you my full attention."

Moving across the shining floor with a show of confidence she did not feel, Val stood before the Leng musicians. Every pair of flat black eyes was rivetted on her. Slowly, with infinite grace, she began to move, marking the rhythm with hands and feet and gently swaying body. The drums and shining tubes followed the beat. As she postured and swayed, Val watched the entrance. Her mind scrabbled among a dozen plans to rescue Phil, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when the Leng guards appeared with two of the Masters, herding the prisoners into the room, she had no idea how she was to help them.

She swept along beside them, searching for the beloved face. It was a pitiful company that straggled over to lean against the wall, or sag to the floor. Matted hair and beards, stained rags of clothing, signs of torment and neglect marked every haggard prisoner. Most of the men stared dully ahead, or hung their heads fearfully against the light; a few glared hatred and defiance from red-rimmed eyes. The last to come in was an odd little group of three. A burly miner and a Leng supported the legless figure of the former mine manager between them.

Val swung out into the room at a faster tempo, sick with dismay. *Phil was not among the prisoners.* Was he too weak to move, lying alone in the dark? No, for the manager had been brought up. Phil would have been, too. Then he must be already dead. She paused in front of Samith, inclined her head and waited.

"Yes?"

"This is a sorry lot to celebrate the Feast of the Masters. Are there no more?"

"The rest are dead. Earthmen are weaklings. If your blood hunger demands more, I will give you Lengs—"

The Master nearest to Samith leaned forward. "The native who offered to serve us may have lured some of his fellows into the valley."

Samith turned to his Leng. "See if the Renegade has any prisoners the woman could use." He explained to Val, "An Earthman is getting us information we need. You may not have him yet, but he may have captured others you may have. He brought a prospector in for the Leng last night."

Val remembered the terrible screaming across the plaza and was sickened. She shook her head. "These will be enough," she said, heavy at heart. With Phil gone, all that was left was to try to free the captives. Chester would be reading her mind. Bring on your bomber, she thought, desolately.

The Masters were bending toward her with interest. "How do you plan to sacrifice your victims?" asked Drogu.

"By the knife, as I dance," Val pointed to the elaborate dagger in Samith's belt. "If my lord pleases?"

Samith grinned with pleasure as he handed her the gleaming blade.

"Do not hurry with the death stroke," called Drogu, greedily.

"Have no fear," boasted Samith. "This is the woman for whom the Earthmen search, she who kills as our priestesses do, making an art of agony."

The Masters chorused approbation as Val accepted the knife. She held it in both hands above her head, undulating her body, increasing the tempo of her movements with rapid beats of her bare feet.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The drummers picked up the faster beat as Val advanced on the straggling line of prisoners. She went down the line in front of them, touching each man on the breast with the needle point of the knife. Most of them, broken by pain and the horror of years of solitary confinement, cowered away. But one white-haired man stared straight ahead, murmuring in a steady monotone which didn't falter as the cold metal rested over his heart. Next in line was the burly miner who had helped bring in the manager. As she came close to him, he spat at her. The Leng guards jerked him back savagely, but Val motioned them to release his arms. She came closer, lifted the knife and pricked his upper lip so blood flowed over his mouth and into his beard. She touched her finger in the blood.

"Death to the Enemy," she said clearly, her eyes holding his. Then with his blood she painted on his chest the old symbol of the resistance, the Cross of Lorraine, upside down, so his downward glance would give him the correct perspective. His eyes had automatically followed her moving finger. Now they flashed up, red-rimmed and wild, to scan her face. He frowned, started to speak. She took Cobber's head in one hand, leaned forward, and smeared it in the drip of blood from his lip. As she did so, she whispered, stiff-lipped, "Make a break when I stab Smith!"

Until she said the words, she hadn't had a conscious plan of action. To stab Samith Rhu—that should be as good a diversion as any! With Phil lost to her, she should try to make as much trouble for the Masters as possible. Not daring to wait to see whether he had understood, she whirled into the center of the room, thrust the knife between her skin and her brassiere strap, and activated Cobber's mechanism. Beating a new, languorous rhythm, Val went into her dance.

The Masters watched avidly. Val was good. Blasé nightclub audiences had sat up, forgetting their drinks and their furtive philandering, enthralled in the sinuous patterns woven by the woman's body and the snake's. Only the sultry beat of the drums and the nerve-tingling chimes sounded in the mirrored room as Val and her reflections postured and swayed. Cobber writhed around her body, his gleaming folds accenting her supple curves. The drums beat faster, the silver tubes clanged—

There was a commotion at the door. Three Lengs wrestled with someone, spilling into the room in a tangle of arms and legs and dark, hairy bodies. The Ryn rose to his feet, light reflecting coldly from the beautiful golden planes of his skull. "What is the meaning of—"

Val stiffened and stopped dancing as the tangle sorted and she recognized the battered figure who was being dragged to his feet. *Jones!*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Kill the intruder! Use the whips!" cried out several of the Masters. A few of them drew out squat, ugly-looking tubes from their belts and looked to Samith Rhu for permission to use them. But the Ryn was looking at Val, smiling oddly.

"Release him. Let him come forward," he said. "In a way, he is one of us."

Jones shook off his captors and came to stand beside Val. The girl's heart sank. Jones was the renegade, the Earthman who had sold out his world and his fellowmen! She tried to estimate the extent of the damage. Jones had been one of the inner circle, in Chester's complete confidence. He knew everything which had been planned against the Masters. This was disaster! How could the telepath have been so deceived? Val stared at Jones, heartsick. His dark face was unreadable. One of the Lengs thrust forward, jabbering at the Ryn. Samith Rhu listened intently, his amber eyes going from Val to Jones. The Leng ended by tearing Jones' shirt open. There was a heavy golden chain around his neck.

"Kang says this man was found among the Lengs, urging them to rise against the Masters. He claims he is the Leng of this woman—" interpreted Samith Rhu.

"That cannot be!" protested Drogu. "She is no Krydomena. How can she have a Leng?"

"There are perhaps more things in the universe than you or I have knowledge of, my cousin," said Samith, smoothly. He was obviously enjoying the other's discomfiture. "Perhaps we decided too hastily that she was not one of us. But no matter—" he cut off the other's beginning objections. "Be he Leng or not, he has spoken treason against us, and there is only one punishment for that."

Drogu sank back on his dais, somewhat appeased. "You are right. What difference does it make what ghul-bodies this accursed planet spawns, in the likeness of our race or the Lengs, when within seven days there will be none alive on Earth but the Masters—"

Jones twisted toward the huddle of Leng servants, guards and musicians. "See?" he shouted. "Our fate is decided! We are as good as dead! Will you strike now, or let them kill us at their leisure?"

The Lengs surged forward, clutching musical instruments, heavy metal serving platters or whatever could be used as a weapon. The burly miner came forward in a wary rush, his big hands flexing. Behind him the earth men straggled, some cautiously, even fearfully, yet all determined to be in the fight. Not one tried to escape through the doorway behind them. The manager, pulling himself along with his arms, was crying with sheer frustration.

Jones cast one glance of agonized indecision toward Val. When he saw her moving forward, knife in hand, he grinned briefly and turned

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his attention to Samith Rhu. The attack had been so sudden that the Masters had hardly had time to raise themselves from their cross-legged position on their dais-platforms; even as Val advanced on Samith Rhu, she noticed them pulling the squat nerve-whip tubes from their belts. But it had been a ritual feast, and very few of the Masters had come armed. Samith's eyes were incredulous on Val's beautiful stern face. He wasn't sure, for a moment, whether she was coming to range herself beside him, or to attack. By the time he decided, it was too late for flight. He bent to pick up a heavy crystal and gold goblet—and then Jones was ahead of Val in a flash and had his fingers around the giant's throat.

Somebody tore the knife from Val's hand. When she saw it was one of the prisoners, she snatched up a long narrow tray and swung it around her head like a baseball bat, clearing away three Masters who were converging on Jones and Samith Rhu. Her tray struck Ryn Drogu a glancing blow and he went down. Then, from somewhere above, came a thunder of sound, a human voice amplified almost beyond understanding. Battered by the incredible din, the struggling units froze and listened, perforce.

"—called Master Race, you are trapped," bellowed the voice. "Ten vertijets form a lattice above Ore Valley. Armored trucks command the road. A bomber is now on its way. You have ten minutes to surrender or die. You have ten minutes to surrender or die! Lengs, arise against the cruel Masters who have so long enslaved you. We of Earth will give you freedom and friendship. So-called Master Race, you are trapped—"

The tight-locked combatants within the banquet room went at each other as though they had never stopped to listen. They fought with a silent vicious ferocity which appalled Val. No one heeded the warning of the bomb. Neither Master, Leng, nor Earthman asked or gave quarter. Here and there a nerve-whip sparkled green, and a wail of agony rose, but for the most part it was a battle of fists and clawing nails and tearing teeth. The monster voice boomed on overhead, but no one listened.

Then Jones, bloody from a dozen scratches, shot from the press and seized Val's arm. "Get out of here! Up to the roof," he gasped. "Chester's got a pick-up waiting for you."

"Steve's looking for Phil. We've got to warn him—"

"He'll get out." Jones was urging her toward the door.

"I'm not going without you." Val planted her feet stubbornly and swatted a fleeing Master with the tray.

"The boys seem to be keeping each other busy," Jones said grimly. "I think we might slip away." He went ahead of her, clearing a path to the door with battering fists and elbows and feet. The tide of battle had washed over to the far

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

side of the huge room, where the few living Masters were making a last stand against a snarling ring of Lengs. Just as they reached the doorway Steve appeared, holding a goodlooking man by one arm.

"Phil!" squealed Val and threw herself into his arms. "Oh, Phil!"

Jones raised his eyebrows. Steve said, not looking at anyone in particular, "I found him—locked in a room."

Val turned a radiant face from Steve to her husband. "How can we ever thank you? —Darling, we thought you were dead. Samith Rhu said—"

"What is this? What're you doing here, dressed like this?"

"Let's talk about it some other time," urged Steve. "There's a bomb due—" He took Val's arm and tried to guide her through the doorway.

"Suppose you take your filthy paws off my wife," said Phil. "I'm not sure what this's all about—" he came a little further into the room, his handsome face set in a resentful frown.

A hoarse voice shouted: *"It's him! It's the collaborator!"*

They turned. The manager, carried by the miner and another prisoner, was coming toward them.

"What—?" began Val. Phil was staring at the blood-stained, battered trio, his face a mask of fear.

"Keep them off me! I did what I had to—I had to stay alive, didn't I?" He broke and raced along the hall. The manager and his carriers shouldered past Val and the agents and pounded after him. Val stared after them, her face rigid and pale with dawning comprehension. Steve said, "I'll help him. I'll explain—"

"Explain what?" whispered Val. "That he loved his own skin more than his country?"

"You mustn't be too hard on him," said Steve awkwardly. They were moving down the hall the way the others had gone. Holding the gun Val had forgotten to use, Jones was covering the retreat, as Steve hurried Val along. "Men break under torment—"

"Phil hadn't been tortured. He must have made a deal with the Masters as soon as they caught him."

"Maybe he had some kind of a plan. Phil was a great one for plans." Steve peered ahead anxiously. Somewhere something was burning, and outside, yells mingled with the boom of the loudspeaker. They were approaching the lobby. As they came through the arch, they almost ran into the prisoner who had been with the manager and the miner.

"Dirty rat hid in a room upstairs," growled the man. "The Boss and Gregg are still lookin' for him. I'm gettin' out."

"Tell everybody to clear out. The army's dropping a big one any minute." Steve threw the last words over his shoulder as he led Val up the stairs. In a few seconds they were clambering out onto the fire escape and up to the roof. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hooded lights of a helijet glowed before them.

"What kept you guys?" grumbled the pilot, hauling Val up beside him. "Dawn's about to break."

Jones slid in beside Val and started to close the door.

"Where's Steve?" gasped Val. "You're leaving him—!" She tried to get out. Jones blocked the way.

"Look, Val. We're doing a job. My orders were to go in, stir up trouble, and get you out. Steve was to try to rescue Phil. He's gone to find him. We do what the man tells us and hope we come out alive. Now sit down and let's get started or so help me, I'll cut you down to my size."

Val took a good look at his face and sat down meekly. Jones glared at her for a minute, slid out to the roof and said quietly, "Take her up." He slammed the door and darted back across the roof to the fire escape.

Val bit her lip. Love dies hard. Yet to deliberately sacrifice two men like Steve and Jones to save a man who had betrayed his kind— "Can we wait—just for a minute?" she asked humbly.

The young pilot shrugged. "Oh, sure, we've got lots of time. Maybe a whole minute."

Val sniffed. The pilot said, "He wasn't supposed to go back. Is Steve your man?"

"They both are," said Val, and tears flowed down her face. The pilot gunned his jets uncomfortably. Then he froze, staring at the edge of the roof. Two shadows erupted and raced across the roof. The pilot hit the controls before they got through the door. Val and Steve hauled Jones inside by the seat of his pants as the ship swung thrashing up into the air.

"Get clear fast," roared Steve.

"I thought I'd just hang around and get vaporized," retorted the pilot sourly. "What kept you?" He threw the jet forward, rising just enough to clear the first low hill, then dropping down into the little valley beyond. "Hold everything!"

Behind them, in Ore Valley, the fire ball flowered blindingly. They were protected from the main blast, but the little ship rocked and jolted violently as the pilot swung across the desert, practically clipping the low-growing sage. Then they were around a thrusting butte, and the bomb was just a cloudy glow in the sky behind.

"I went back for Phil," Steve said.

"Why?" asked Val, dully.

"Chester wanted to talk to him."

"Couldn't you find him?"

Steve didn't meet her eyes.

Nobody said anything until they set down on a level stretch of desert near the gray and tan camouflaged tents. Wearily they made their way to the largest tent to report to Chester. Seated at a table with an Army Colonel and an Air Force General, Chester barely glanced up at them as they entered. He was speaking into a hand mike.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"—that's it, Mr. President. The Ore Valley landing's completely wiped out. The Masters and Lengs were so busy killing each other they ignored our ultimatum. Yes, there were a few human prisoners left alive, but they didn't want to be rescued. They had some scores to settle. Mrs. Norton's husband?" Chester peered up at Val. "I'm afraid he died with the other prisoners, Sir. . . . Yes, I'll convey your regrets to her. Abbot and Jones got her out—with the help of an Air Force pilot.

"I've just had a report from the Canadians. They went into action fast and surrounded that ghost town in British Columbia where the Masters had dug in. Told them to surrender or be vaporized. The Lengs didn't rise against the Masters. The whole bunch surrendered except the leader, who committed suicide. . . .

"We lost eleven men at the abandoned coal mining town in Pennsylvania. The Masters retreated into the old mine shaft; when our men followed, they blew the shaft.

"Yes, Sir, there were four other colonies spotted around the world. I read their locations in Smith's mind while he was boasting to Mrs. Norton. There's one in a Soviet Labor camp, one in Tibet in a lamasery, one in the Sahara at an oasis and one in the Andes. You'll have to go through channels, I guess. The locations are on their way to you by jet. The Invasion is set to take place next Sunday . . ."

There was a long pause as the voice at the other end spoke. Then Chester said, "Thank you, Sir. I'll tell them. I agree we must keep this very quiet until the other four settlements are under control. We captured five of their craft and the Canadians got a number of prisoners. I'll probe them for the principles involved in building and operating the craft—which, by the way, are disc-shaped, domed out above and below, but which look like full spheres when in flight because they are circled with a globe of green light. That spider-web fallout is an amazing thing—it's the end-product of their fuel system. They actually use the filament obtained from giant spiders—had a whole colony of 'em producing in the central plaza—and they take radioactive dust and coat the strands and then run them through a matter-displacement relix at the speed of light— Yes, Sir. I'll write it all out for the scientists. Thank *you*, Sir. I'll make a full report after I've talked to Mrs. Norton."

He sat back in the camp chair, his blue eyes blinking behind the thick lenses. "The President thinks you deserve a medal," he observed drily. The Army and Air Force officers got up and went out. They could smell a singe-off.

"What for?" asked Steve.

"The Lengs and the prisoners took over," added Jones, "while we were beating a masterly retreat."

Chester glared at them. "Masterly? You almost didn't make it, you

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

master minds! You were so busy being heroes for Val—"

"You have no right to speak to them that way," raged Val. "They were just doing as they were told—!"

"Mrs. Norton." Chester held up his hand. "They are both angry at me because they didn't get a chance to fight aliens and so become heroes in your eyes. I will not embarrass you by announcing the causes for your emotional reactions. Instead of allowing yourselves to be swayed by emotion, you should be giving thanks that due to my foresight and your grudging obedience, you accomplished what had to be done without getting killed or injured. In a couple of hundred years, military strategy will consist in accomplishing the desired end with little or no loss of life. I am a Forerunner, much ahead of my time, but I have demonstrated the basic principles for the armed services in this project. Whether any of you are mature and civilized enough to benefit by the demonstration is a moot point. However: we have their ships, a good number of prisoners, and enough information to immobilize their other bases and ward off or destroy their invasion forces. And all at a cost of fewer than fifteen men. It is I who should receive the President's medal." He stared speculatively at Val. "I wonder if my mental qualities are actually capable of being passed along?"

"You are not running our private lives yet," snapped Steve, angrily.

"You haven't got any—yet. There's still the Invasion to be dealt with. I'll have to take some Masters to the Andes base—that's their headquarters—and figure out their system of communication so I can dicker with the Invasion fleet if the President wishes to handle it that way. Or we could just sabotage their guidance beams and landing grids. It's taken them ten years to set this invasion up. A crushing defeat will probably keep them off our necks for good. I'll need both of you with me. But not Valentine. You two might just fall off a ledge or something, showing her how brave you are."

"After that, I'm putting in for a transfer," gritted Steve. "Sir."

Chester smiled patronizingly. "I'm afraid I shan't be able to spare you. Palomar reports a suspicious object heading toward Sol from the outer edge of the galaxy. It is needle-shaped, incredibly long, and emitting infra-red waves in a definite pattern. As soon as we clear up the Master invasion, we'll get right onto reconnaissance. We'll take one of the Master's discs out to scout the new arrival. Come with me now. I'm going to scan the captured Masters and learn how to run their craft and I'll want you to know how."

Val looked at Steve and Jones. They were dirty and exhausted, spattered with their own and the enemy's blood. Yet they would go

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

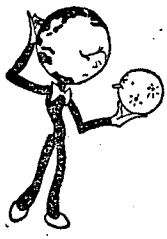
right out again, doing their loyal, unromantic best to carry out the schemes of the little telepath. There was also a personal problem between them. Val didn't have to be telepathic to sense the existence of a rivalry between the three men for her attention.

Chester stood up and walked over to Steve and Jones, and Val caught the look which passed between them, strong and reassuring as a handclasp. Val realized that, given the right kind of men, a triangle can bind rather than disrupt.

Jones managed a grin as he fingered the golden collar he hadn't had time to remove. "Hope the Master race in the next bunch is short and hairy. I'm a little tired of being the subhuman in this threesome."

HAVE YOU A COMPLETE FILE OF

FANTASTIC UNIVERSE?



HERE's your chance to purchase all 51 issues published to date. A few copies are still available and they are yours by filling in the coupon below. FANTASTIC UNIVERSE *is always star-studded by the best writers in the field. We are now offering these at BARGAIN PRICES—single copies at 35¢; three copies at $1.00; six copies at $1.75; and twelve copies at $3.25.*

KING-SIZE PUBLICATIONS, Inc. FU 85
320 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, New York

Kindly send me the copies of FANTASTIC UNIVERSE which I have circled below. One copy at 35¢, three copies at $1, six copies at $1.75, twelve copies at $3.25. I enclose $_____ in full payment; postage prepaid.

JUNE '53; AUG. '53; OCT. '53; JAN. '54; MAR. '54; MAY '54; JULY '54; SEPT. '54; OCT. '54; NOV. '54; DEC. '54; JAN. '55; FEB. '55; MAR. '55; APR. '55; MAY '55; JUNE '55; JULY '55; AUG. '55; SEPT. '55; OCT. '55; NOV. '55; DEC. 55; JAN. '56; FEB. '56; MAR. '56; APR. '56; MAY '56; JUNE '56; JULY '56; AUG. '56; SEPT. '56; OCT. '56; NOV. '56; DEC. '56; JAN. '57; FEB. '57; MAR. '57; APR. 57; MAY '57; JUNE '57; JULY '57; AUG. '57; SEPT. '57; OCT. '57; NOV. '57; DEC. '57; JAN. '58; FEB. '58; MAR. '58; APR. '58.

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY, ZONE, STATE_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shapes in the sky

by . . . Civilian Saucer Intelligence

A report on the November sightings and on how the Air Force then slew the Flying Saucer Dragons. . . .

IN THE first week of November, 1957, the front pages of American newspapers were aswarm with the doings of what a hundred facetious editors were unanimously inspired to call "whatniks"—nothing more or less than flying saucers, under a new and even more grotesque name.

On November 7, practically every paper in the country carried a story declaring that "Air Force Says No Evidence For Flying Saucers Ever Found."

In the second week of November, all the "whatniks" abruptly disappeared—if not from the skies, at least from the news columns.

And on the 16th, the press sōlemnly recorded that the U. S. Air Force had "refuted the flying saucer tales"—and that was that, until the next time.

Brief though it was, the UFO wave of Nov. 2-7, 1957, was probably as intense a visitation as this part of our planet has yet experienced. Brief though it is, the Air Force's official "explanation" of five of the reports on Nov. 15 is as revealing an illustration of the hollowness of the Air Force's sham UFO "investigation" as has ever been foisted on gullible citizens. Brief

Civilian Saucer Intelligence of New York, authors of the above discussion of the November sightings and on the Air Force analysis of the same, is a Metropolitan Area research group which holds occasional public meetings, publishes a newsletter, and has a considerable file of material on UFOlogy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

though this article must necessarily be, we can at least summarize what happened in those five cases—quote the *Air Force's* version of what happened—and show why the Air Force version is (to quote Dr. Donald Menzel somewhat out of context) "nothing but bubbles of hot air."

Whether by coincidence or not, the outbreak of the November UFO epidemic came just one hour after the launching of Sputnik II on the other side of the globe—many hours before it was publicly announced by the Russians. At 10:50 p.m CST, on the night of Nov. 2, the police station of Levelland, near Lubbock in northwestern Texas, received a phone call from a local farmhand and part-time barber, Pedro Saucado, who had been driving with his companion Joe Salaz about 4 miles northwest of Levelland when, as he told the police and the Lubbock *Avalanche* reporter the next day:

"We first saw a flash of light in the field to our right and we didn't think much about it . . . then it rose up out of the field and started toward us, picking up speed. When it got nearer, the lights of my truck went out and the motor died. I jumped out and hit the deck as the thing passed directly over the truck with a great sound and a rush of wind. It sounded like thunder, and my truck rocked from the blast. I felt a lot of heat. Then I got up and watched it go out of sight toward Levelland." Saucado said the object was "torpedo-shaped—like a rocket," and he estimated it as 200 feet long. Afraid to return to Levelland for fear of encountering it again, the two men drove on to Whiteface, ten miles west of Levelland, where they phoned in their report to the police station. Although Saucado sounded "terrified," the officer on duty did not at that time take the report seriously.

An hour later, the police telephone rang again. Jim Wheeler, driving about 4 miles *east* of Levelland, had seen a blazing, 200-foot egg-shaped object sitting on the road ahead of him; at the same time, his car lights went out and his motor died. The object rose and disappeared. A few minutes later came a call from Whitharral, 10 miles north-northeast of Levelland: José Alvarez declared that his lights and motor had gone dead as he drove near a bright, egg-shaped object on the road. At 12:15 a.m., Frank Williams of Kermit, Texas, reported a similar encounter in the same area.

After this the county sheriff, Weir Clem, together with numerous highway patrol officers, took to the roads in search of the hedge-hopping egg. At 1:30, Clem, driving back toward Levelland from the north, briefly saw a streak of light cross the highway an estimated 300-400 yards south of them: "it lit up the whole pavement in front of us for about two seconds."

Clem described it later as oval-shaped, and said it looked "like a brilliant red sunset." Two highway patrolmen in a car a couple of miles

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

behind Clem also observed the flash of light.

At about the same time, Levelland Fire Marshal Ray Jones was also looking for the mystery object north of Levelland, when his car engine "almost died, then started up again." Immediately afterwards, he saw a "streak of light" which "appeared to be north of the flats."

At the same time as these officials were seeing this, the police station received a call from a Waco truck-driver, James D. Long, who reported that at 1:15 he had been driving on a farm road about 5 miles northwest of Levelland when he came upon a 200-foot-long "egg-shaped mass" that "glowed like a neon sign." His engine coughed and died, and his lights went out. As he got out and approached the object, which was less than a hundred yards away, it suddenly took off straight upwards. (The United Press story said that it departed with a roaring noise; the Associated Press quoted Clem as saying that Long fainted from fright; these details are not confirmed by local accounts.) After the object was gone, Long's engine started easily.

The next day two more witnesses reported to the police that they too had encountered the UFO. Texas Tech freshman Newell Wright, Jr., 19, was approaching Levelland from the east at 12:05 a.m. and was about 10 miles from town when he noticed his ammeter jump to "discharge" and back; then the motor quit, "as if it were out of gas," and the car rolled to a stop as the lights went out. He got out and looked under the hood but could find nothing wrong. Turning around he saw, in the road ahead, an egg-shaped object with a flattened bottom—"like a loaf of bread"—and glowing "not as bright as neon." No portholes or propellers were visible. Frightened, Wright got back into his car and tried to start it, without success. After a few minutes, the "egg" rose almost straight up, veered slightly to the north, and disappeared from view "in a split instant." After it was gone, the car started normally. Wright reported his experience only at his parents' urging, and after interviewing him Sheriff Clem "vowed that young Wright's story was a factual account."

These were the principal reports on the Levelland "egg," as described in the Levelland *Sun-News*, 11/5 and 11/6, and the Lubbock *Avalanche*, 11/4. It seems that one may be unreliable: but others were trustworthy. "I definitely know there was something," Sheriff Clem told the *Sun-News*. "I know it from not having any controversy between those who saw it. Their stories fit to a T."

Let us see now how the Air Force "refuted" this "flying-saucer tale." Air Force Press Release No. 1108-57 of Nov. 15, 1957, opens with these paragraphs:

As a result of inquiries concerning Air Force evaluation of recent Unidentified Flying Object reports, the following general aspects of certain reports have been ascertained:

1. LEVELLAND, Texas: (Big

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Light, seen by "dozens," stalled autos)

Investigation on the scene revealed that only three persons, rather than "dozens," could be located who saw the "big light." Preliminary reports have not revealed cause of "stalled" automobiles at this time, although rain and electrical storms at the time of the reported sightings, affecting wet electrical circuits, could be cause. Object visible only few seconds, not sustained visibility as had been implied.

EVALUATION: Weather phenomenon of electrical nature, generally classified as "Ball Lightning" or "St. Elmo's Fire," caused by stormy conditions in the area, including mist, rain, thunderstorm and lightning.

One wonders what were the feelings of the local Weather Bureau officials on reading this "evaluation"! It was specifically stated in the Levelland *Sun-News* of Nov. 5 that *"Weathermen said they could not explain away the sightings. There were no thunderstorms in the area, and they scoffed at St. Elmo's light."* Just for the record, it should also be pointed out that the anonymous author of the "evaluation" was evidently unaware that St. Elmo's Fire (brush electrical discharge) is never red in color; that it is always attached to ground objects, and cannot rise into the air; that is *an entirely different phenomenon* from ball lightning; that ball lightning itself is, like flying saucers, an inexplicable phenomenon whose very existence is denied by the majority of scientists; that ball lightning is not neon-red, either; and that ball lightning is seldom, if ever, more than one foot in diameter! As for the suggested explanation for the mysterious stalling of engines, it would be an unacceptable one even if there had been torrential downpours (which there weren't), since all of the witnesses stated that their ignition functioned normally again *as soon as the object had departed.*

In this case, by good luck, we happen to know something about the character of the "investigation" conducted by the Air Force. It consisted of one man, in civilian clothes, who "first showed up at the sheriff's office about 11:45 a.m." on November 5, made two automobile excursions during the day, and finally told Clem, "Well, I'm done" about seven hours after his arrival. (Considering how little time he put in on it, he did well to interview even *three* witnesses, if he did interview them.) "There was never any hint as to what he found or whether he was really a civilian or an Air Force officer"; but for once the Air Force's secrecy did not succeed in concealing the embarrassing truth, for "an out-of-state newsman said he recognized the mysterious investigator, and identified him as an Air Force sergeant." (Levelland *Sun-News,* 11/6 and 11/7.)

On the night of November 2-3, orange-luminous objects were seen not only near Levelland, but in many places in Western Texas and other parts of the Southwest. Two and a half hours after Sheriff Clem's expe-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rience, the first of a pair of similar incidents took place 250 miles west of Levelland, near the site of the world's first A-bomb explosion about 60 miles north-northwest of White Sands National Monument, New Mexico. At 3 a.m. (MST) on November 3, Cpl. Glenn H. Toy and Pfc. James Wilbanks were in the "Trinity site area" near the old abandoned A-bomb bunkers on a routine jeep patrol when they saw a "very bright object" high up in the sky. The object came down very slowly until it was about 50 yards above the old bunkers, two or three miles from the observers. "It stayed there motionless about three minutes, giving off a brilliant reddish-orange light," said Toy. He compared its brilliance to the sun, although the light "was contained within itself," and did not illuminate the ground. "Then it came to the ground fairly fast at about a 45-degree angle. The light went out quickly. It looked like a completely controlled landing." The soldiers described the object as egg-shaped, and estimated it to be 75 or 100 feet in diameter. Admitting later that they had been "pretty scared," the two men did not approach the site of the apparent landing, but immediately reported the incident to their commanding officer, Lt. Miles F. Penney. The sergeant of the guard returned to the area, but failed to find anything. However, "officials admitted that because of the lack of roads in the area, it was possible to have overlooked an object if one had been there." At this time neither of the men had yet heard of the Texas reports of a few hours before.

At 8 p.m. that evening, two other MPs, Sp/3C Richard Oakes and Sp/3C Henry Barlow, were patrolling in a jeep in the same area when they encountered a similar, or the same, blazing "egg." They knew nothing, they said, of the Toy-Wilbanks observation of that morning. They first noticed the object, "200 or 300 feet long and very bright," hovering approximately 50 yards above the old bunkers, two or three miles to the east of them. Then it began to rise slowly, at a 45-degree angle; stopped; then continued to rise, blinking on and off as it got higher and higher. "It got so far up it looked like a big star," Oakes said. "Then all of a sudden the light went out." The soldiers filed a report with the provost marshal, who noticed the similarity to the Toy-Wilbanks report and brought it to their attention. (El Paso *Times,* 11/6; AP in Albuquerque *Journal,* 11/6.)

The most natural interpretation of these reports is that an orange-luminous, controlled object, similar in all respects to that seen at Levelland, was seen to land close to the A-bomb site at 3 a.m., and was seen to take off again from the same spot seventeen hours later. The only reasonable alternative is that the witnesses were in collusion to perpetrate a hoax. But the Air Force explainers did not care for the most natural interpretation; and apparently they did not concern themselves much with the reasonableness of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their alternative. Here is what they came up with in their Nov. 15 press release:

4. *WHITE SANDS, New Mexico (Two patrols report UFO's separate times)*

Investigation revealed that originators had discussed phenomena among themselves, accounting for similar stories, first given to local newspapers, then reported to their command. Astro plots indicate Venus is at magnitude at the time, place and direction of the first patrol's observation and the moon, with scattered clouds was in general direction of the second patrol's observation.

EVALUATION: Astronomical.

The "originators" of this "evaluation" would have achieved a more convincing effect if they had stopped after the first sentence, with its clear implication that the reports were at least partially fictitious, and their "originators" publicity seekers. To be sure, the accuracy of this allegation is highly dubious. The charge that the reports were "first given to local newspapers, then reported to their command" would appear to be refuted by the newspaper accounts themselves: those we have seen state that the newspapers were first informed of the sighting by the witnesses' commanding officer, Lt. Penney.

Nevertheless, the Air Force explainers are on safer ground when they impugn the witnesses' integrity than when they attempt to venture into astronomy. Whoever wrote the second sentence has crammed a more than usual number of crass boners into it. "Venus is at magnitude" is an entirely meaningless expression; and if the "astro plots" (star maps?) really indicated that Venus was visible during either sighting, they had better be junked. At the time of the first patrol's observation, 3 a.m., Venus is *never* visible! And at the time of the second patrol's observation, it had set at 7:30, half an hour before the object was seen. The Air Force evaluator was not only unaware of this, but ignored the fact that the second patrol (which he seems to have confused with the first) saw the object *rising* to the *east* of them—while Venus, when it was visible, had been *setting* in the *west!*

Illiterate "evaluations" like these are a disgrace to the organization that issues them, and to the press that publicizes them under such headlines as "Air Force Refutes Flying Saucer Tales." In this case the Associated Press did its bit to make confusion even worse confounded: its story on the Air Force press release spoke of the observations as having been made by "*planes* patrolling near White Sands."

Seventeen hours after the second of these bomb-site observations, there was another remarkable occurrence 100 miles to the south-southeast. At 1:10 p.m., on Nov. 4, 46-year-old James Stokes, a veteran of 24 years in the Navy, now a high-altitude missile engineer at Holloman Air Force Base, was driving south from Alamogordo to El Paso

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on Highway 54. Eight miles beyond the desert town of Orogrande, his car radio began to fade, then died; at the same time, his motor quit. As the car rolled to a stop, Stokes noticed that half a dozen cars ahead of him, evidently similarly afflicted, were likewise pulling off to the side of the highway. People were getting out of the other cars and pointing to the northeast. Looking in that direction, Stokes saw an egg-shaped object, "mother-of-pearl" in color, rapidly approaching in a shallow dive. Making an abrupt right turn toward Orogrande, the object "made a pass" at the highway to the north of them, then disappeared quickly in the north. Two or three minutes later, the "egg" reappeared from the same direction, crossed the highway an estimated two miles north of them, then swerved to the northwest again and went off toward the San Andres mountains. After this the automobiles could be started normally, though Stokes found his battery "steaming." "Judging from the distance the object covered and the extremely short time it took to cover it, I'd judge that it must have been traveling at a rate of Mach 2" (nearly 2,000 mph), Stokes said, adding that "the object apeared to be 1,500-3,000 feet in altitude. I based this guess on the heights of the cloud formations overhead, which the object flew into now and then. It must have been about 300 to 500 feet long, and something like 100-200-feet in thickness. We were able to view it for two or three minutes at most." He saw no windows nor any other markings. There was no sound whatever, and it left no vapor trail.

"As it passed, I could feel a kind of heat wave, like radiation from a giant sun lamp," Stokes said, and he found afterwards that he had received a slight burn, similar to a sunburn. (This detail was confirmed by veteran UFO investigator Coral Lorenzen, the director of Aerial Phenomena Research Organization at Alamogordo, who is personally acquainted with Stokes and interviewed him later that evening. On the following day, though, Mrs. Lorenzen noted that the reddening had disappeared.)

Stokes said that one of the other witnesses was a Mr. Duncan of Las Cruces, who had photographed the UFO with a 35-mm. camera, and that another was Allan D. Baker, from White Sands Proving Ground. However, neither of these two supporting witnesses had been located as of this writing.

(Sources for the above: Alamogordo *Daily News,* 11/5; *APRO Bulletin,* Nov., 1957; Terry Clarke in *Writer's Digest,* Dec., 1957; AP and UP wire-service stories.)

The Air Force's explanation for this incident was a brusque one.

2. *ALAMOGORDO (sic), New Mexico (10 stalled autos, radio fade-out, "heat" light and "sunburn")*

Investigation of originator's report revealed no "sunburn" effect from "heat" light; originator admitted

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

radio fade-out previously in same area; none of witnesses originator cited in other automobiles could be found after extensive search.
EVALUATION: Hoax presumably suggested by the Levelland, Texas "reports."

An accusation of hoax is difficult to refute, unless direct confirmatory evidence can be produced; it can't be said *positively* that this "evaluation" is as worthless as the others, though we are strongly inclined to believe that it is. As to the absence of visible sunburn at the time the Air Force "investigated the originator's report," we have Coral Lorenzen's testimony that something resembling a sunburn *was,* indeed, visible on Stokes on the night of the 4th. As to the alleged previous radio fade-outs, the point would be relevant only to an attempted explanation of the story as a *mistake;* it has nothing to do with an explanation of the story as a fabrication. The non-appearance of confirming witnesses may be admitted; and while the Air Force investigator's search for them was most likely *not* "extensive," that of the local newspapers probably *was.* But on this point Mrs. Lorenzen has an interesting suggestion to make: as one familiar with the Alamogordo region, she points out that it is very likely that all of the drivers on that road at that time were, like Stokes, Air Force employees, aware of their employer's attitude toward UFO observations.

Perhaps the most significant bit of evidence is the fact that Stokes—accused of perpetrating an embarrassing hoax—at last reports still retained his job at Holloman! His reputation there seems to have been a good one: on the 4th, "Holloman spokesmen said the background and experience of Mr. Stokes rendered him competent in the observation of flying objects, and said the Air Force was accepting Stokes's report as bona fide" (Alamogordo *News,* 11/5.)

Incidentally, the AP story on the Air Force's explanations gave the impression that it had turned out to be an "exaggeration" of some genuine but commonplace occurrence. Perhaps the AP felt it would be more prudent not to publish such a strong accusation.

Fifteen hours after Stokes saw and felt his UFO, something was seen, or felt, by a radar set. At 5:10 a.m. (CST) on Nov. 5, the radarscope of the Coast Guard cutter *Sebago,* 200 miles south of the mouth of the Mississippi in the Gulf of Mexico, began recording "blips" from an unknown object. According to the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* of Nov. 6 and a radio interview the same day with station WBZ in Boston, the "target" was first spotted about 14 miles west-northwest of the ship, moving in a southerly direction. By 5:13 it had approached within two miles of the vessel; then it turned and was moving north, parallel to the ship, when "contact was lost" (possibly from the object's rising out of the radar beam) at 5:14. Two minutes later, it or another similar object was picked up again slightly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

west of due south at 22 miles. This blip receded from the vessel at 1,000 mph, and at 5:18 contact was again lost when it was at a distance of 55 miles. At 5:20, the object showed up again, now stationary only seven miles northeast of the cutter, and the crewman went out on the bridge to look for it. Within a minute, four of them (Ensign Wayne Shockley, the officer of the deck; Lt. Donald Shaffer; 1C quartermaster Kenneth Smith, and radioman Thomas Kirk) did indeed see a luminous object, moving fast on a horizontal trajectory from south to north—but to the *west* of them, not the northeast. Kirk, the first to spot it, shouted "Look at that star—it's moving!" The object, "similar in appearance to the planet Venus," disappeared into a cloudbank after being viewed for three seconds. At 5:31 radar contact was resumed, the target now being 175 miles north-northwest of the cutter; six minutes later it disappeared from the scope for the last time.

According to Ensign Shockley, "the radar contacts were sound and definite." On at least one occasion, the object abruptly stopped and reversed its direction. Lt. Shaffer, the *Sebago's* navigator, said the object's top speed, estimated from the radar returns, was 3,300 miles an hour. Cmdr. C. H. Waring, the ship's captain, confirmed that it had traveled at 1,000 mph at the least: "In about two minutes it went 33 miles straight away from the ship," as he told New Orleans Coast Guard officials later. (And these are probably *nautical* miles, which means a speed of 1,150 *land* miles per hour.)

Readers of our articles on radar-observed UFOs (*Fantastic Universe,* February and March) will recognize how typical is this case, with its objects traveling erratically at speeds varying from zero to super-jet velocities, intermittently disappearing from the radarscope, and apparently showing curiosity about man-made vehicles. ("The course of the object up the side of the ship made people feel they were being observed," remarked Cmdr. Waring, as quoted in the *Times-Picayune.*). But here is what the Air Force said:

3. COAST GUARD CUTTER—Gulf of Mexico (Object seen 3 seconds and radar contact)

Investigation based on data furnished by U. S. Coast Guard, indicated sighting four objects, three being radar and one visual, rather than one as has been widely reported. Radar returns on each of three contacts showed contact in almost direct opposite direction from preceding target, indicating spurious returns (false targets). However, a time-distance plot of two contacts indicated one target had approximate speed of 250 MPH and another a speed of 660 MPH, suggesting a propeller- and jet-type aircraft respectively. The one visual sighting for three seconds, described as bright, like a planet, moving at high speed, horizontally, also indicated high speed aircraft. The area of the sightings is the scene of many flights and operations by the Air Force and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Navy, too numerous to check out based on these reports.
EVALUATION: Aircraft, and possible spurious radar returns.

One would like to have seen the faces of Cmdr. Waring and his crewmen when they read this. As if they had never seen an airplane before! The observed 1,000-mph speed (actually 1,150 mph if they were nautical miles, but the Air Force investigator probably didn't know about nautical miles) has been arbitrarily reduced by one-third to make it a possible speed for a jet plane, and the completely un-planelike hovering and violent maneuvers have been ignored—or shuffled off with a vague noise about "spurious returns," which will seem to mean something only to those who don't know anything about radar. (If it means that the blips were produced, or distorted, by some sort of atmospheric effects, it is nonsense: see our March article.) Just as in the other "evaluations," we see here a vacillation between *two* different, and indeed incompatible, interpretations of the data, neither of which has any real merit—except, of course, the merit of being a *non-UFO* interpretation.

Actually, although the radar returns are thoroughly typical of UFOs, the visual "confirmation" is quite possibly *spurious*. One could hardly expect the Air Force "investigators" to think of this—but the fact is that "Muttnik," the second Russian satellite, was due to the west of that area at just about that time, was traveling in a south-southwest to north-northeast direction, and would have presented exactly the appearance described. Tulane University astronomer J. F. Thomson thought of this immediately when told of the *Sebago's* observation, and in our opinion his suggestion was a valid one. Of course, Thomson could not account for the radar observations, since he added that "I do not believe in the UFO. I have no faith in it." *(Times-Picayune).* Cmdr. L. W. Tibbits, chief of the Eighth Coast Guard District's electronics section, valiantly attempted to attribute *the radar observations, too,* to Muttnik (with the assistance of "patches of ionized air," etc.), and thereby succeeded in producing an "explanation" even more preposterous than the Air Force's.

The fifth and last case mentioned by the Air Force in its Nov. 15 press release was the story told in Kearney, Nebraska, by grain buyer Reinhold Schmidt on the afternoon of November 5. Schmidt said that he had encountered a silvery blimp-shaped craft, which stalled his car's engine, on the ground near Kearney. A middle-aged crewman emerged and temporarily paralyzed him with a ray, but then relented and invited him inside the ship, saying, "We'll have to be here a little while; you might as well come inside." The crew, which was engaged in some sort of electrical repairs, consisted of four men and two women, to all appearances ordinary terrestrial specimens; among themselves they spoke "high

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

German," and the one who spoke English did not speak it very well. Schmidt received neither technical information nor uplifting messages from the taciturn crewmen during his half-hour in the translucent craft, which finally rose silently and vertically with the aid of two large propellers, and disappeared into the sky.

This story, and its sequels, appeared in nearly every newspaper in the country. Schmidt went to the police, who put him in jail, and grilled him without allowing him much sleep. On the 6th it was revealed that Schmidt had a record (in 1938) as an embezzler; and on the 7th, he was examined by psychiatrists, and committed to the State Hospital "for an indefinite period." This was a case after the Air Force's own heart.

5. KEARNEY, Nebraska: (space ship incident.)

Investigation revealed that local officials consider originator wholely unreliable.

EVALUATION: Hoax.

Although the affair is perhaps not quite so "open-and-shut" as it might appear (the newspapers did not mention the fact that Schmidt had been *released* from the hospital), there seems to be little doubt that the Air Force has succeeded in including one correct "evaluation" among its five. The Schmidt story is doubtless to be put in the class of fictitious "contact" claims (see Isabel Davis's article in *F. U.,* November), though it lacks the messianic flavor usually associated with such claims.

Now, aside from these five reports, there were scores of others—at least a hundred sightings, in less than a week!—by witnesses of acceptable veracity. The Air Force's sample represents only about 5% of the UFO reports of that period. What about the other 95%? (Some of these will be discussed in detail in next month's column.)

Of course, after seeing the Air Force's performance against the five cases it *did* elect to do battle with (obviously because they were the most widely publicized ones), we can have no doubt that it could have slain—to its *own* satisfaction—a hundred other flying-saucer dragons with equal ease. "Explanations" come easy, if one is sufficiently careless with the facts. In the first five years of its existence (1947-1952), the Air Force's Project Blue Book found that 26.94% of 1,593 sighting reports analyzed were classifiable as "Unknowns." (Ruppelt, p. 277.) But the "Fact Sheet" No. 1083-57 released on November 5 (which was publicized so widely on Nov. 7) declared that of the 250 reports received in the first half of 1957, only *1.9%* (which figures out, incidentally, to four and three-quarters reports) had to go into the UFO category. "Reporting, investigation, analysis, and evaluation procedures have improved considerably," smugly explained the "Fact Sheet." Unfortunately for the Air Force's reputation, ten days after this boast it committed the indiscretion of exposing to public view a few specific examples of these "improved" procedures.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From these November examples and many others, we can see that the picture of their Project Blue Book so assiduously drawn by the Air Force public-relations officers—thorough investigation, technical personnel, evaluation by experts, "improved methods of analysis"—and thus conclusions invested with a high degree of infallibility—is not quite correct. The officers who put out these statements are entitled to think what they please about UFOs, but they are *not* entitled to make public misrepresentations. They are *not* entitled to claim that the Air Force is doing a proper job of scientific inquiry, when it is not doing anything of the kind—and refusing to give any of its material to a competent civilian agency that *would* do the job. Least of all are they entitled to treat civilian questions as a mere nuisance, civilian skepticism as a wound to their sensibilities, and civilian criticism as a form of blasphemy.

As one UFOlogist commented: "I'm perfectly convinced that the saucers come from space. But there is one thing that would make me doubt it: if the Air Force boys began to support the theory."

MORE ABOUT OUR EXPLORER SATELLITE

The Explorer satellite, a cylinder eighty inches long with a tapered nose and a rocket nozzle at its rear, is gathering and transmitting to earth a variety of scientific data. Its speed is 19,400 miles per hour, a velocity greater than the Russian sputniks. The Jupiter-C rocket which threw the satellite 1,700 miles into space was developed by Dr. Wernher von Braun and his associates at the Army's Ballistic Missile Agency at Huntsville, Alabama. The cosmic ray recording equipment in the satellite was developed in the laboratories of the University of Iowa, while the instruments for measuring micro-meteorite impact on the satellite were developed by a geophysics unit of the Air Force Research Centre; the satellite itself was assembled at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory of the California Institute of Technology under the direction of G.H. Ludwig of the University of Iowa.

The cylinder weighs a total of 30.8 pounds, of which 18.13 represents the satellite package. The weight of the instruments fitted into the satellite is 11 pounds, these including external temperature gauges; a package of instruments to measure the rain of cosmic rays from outer space and to gauge the density of micro-meteorites striking the satellite; and two transmitters for relaying information back to the ground. The higher-powered transmitter (with two pounds of batteries), radiating sixty milliwatts on a frequency of 108.03 megacycles (the approved IGY frequency) was only expected to last a few weeks; the other, radiating 10 to 20 milliwatts on a frequency of 108 megacycles, was expected to keep operating for perhaps three months.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

little green men

by . . . John Nicholson

Here is a different kind of extraterrestrial, much less glamorous than the men and women reported by contactees.

THERE is a tendency, in UFO-minded circles, to ignore the fact that *two* distinct types of contacts with extraterrestrials have been reported —contacts with tall, golden-haired and wise "Teachers," and contacts with little green men, sometimes extremely aggressive, described as anywheres from two and a half to four feet in height.

Admittedly, some of these reports may have been inspired by movies like INVASION OF THE SAUCER MEN, recently seen in the neighborhood theaters, where the little men were satisfactorily gruesome (as extraterrestrials always are in Grade C movies), cluck-clucking away as they scared the life out of youngsters whose necking they were interrupting. The little men obviously did not believe in romance.

There is an understandable tendency to dismiss many of these stories as hoaxes, inspired by Frank Scully's famous report in 1949 of crashed discs and three-foot occupants, but this is a dangerously easy way to dismiss the possibility that some of these UFOs which are rude enough to keep popping up all over the place *are* machines piloted, for one or another practical reason, by unusually

Our cover shows an American Eagle attacking a little green man, emerging from a saucer that has crashed in the mountains. Here is a discussion of the often overlooked appearances of these little green men in saucer sightings, and of the reactions of the men and the women who have seen them.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

small humanoids. We can, of course, as the editor of this magazine pointed out in a recent speech, shut our eyes and insist that the things don't really exist, but when we open our eyes, once more, the blasted things have refused to cooperate and are still there! In other words, while many sightings and contacts are perhaps hoaxes or hallucinations, there is a mounting and impressive body of evidence which cannot be ignored, evidence which leads the objective observer to believe that to dismiss the field as the latest of the mirages exciting a credulous public is not only unjustified—but also dangerous.

We have no way of knowing whether an American Eagle has found itself attacking one of these little men, as shown on the cover of this issue, but an astonishing number of people, here and abroad, testify jointly to the undoubted *existence* of these little men.

Let's take the "Steep Rock Episode," the description of which was first published in *Steep Rock Echo* for September-October, 1950. About dusk, on July 2, 1950, a couple who had been fishing in Steep Rock Lake, Ontario, saw a flying saucer land on the water. Ten occupants of this UFO, each apparently about three and a half feet tall, came out and walked on top of the saucer, their movements like automata rather than living beings (so the report has it), apparently taking on water through a hose.

Take the Marble Creek sightings in California. On May 20th, and again on June 20th, 1953, two miners, John Q. Black and John Van Allen, reported seeing a strange silver object composed of two large discs of metal twelve feet wide and about seven thick, which landed on a sand bar at the junction of the Jordon and Marble Creeks in Butte County, California. The two men were a hundred feet away and watched as a "being," who looked like a broad-shouldered man about four feet tall, descended by a rope ladder. The "being" filled what looked like a bucket with water and handed it to something (or somebody) inside the UFO which took off as soon as they were aware of the two men's presence. Black later reported that he had found two campfires near the sand bar "around which were five-inch footprints. The failure of the UFO to return on July 20th caused Black to be branded as a hoaxer, but researchers have accepted the report as genuine.

Some years earlier, on August 19, 1949, two Death Valley, California, prospectors had reported seeing a disc crash-land and two little men jump out. The men chased the beings but lost them in the dunes; when they got back, the disc had disappeared.

In August, 1952, James Allen, of West Lumberton, North Carolina, said that an eight-foot saucer grazed his chimney and landed in his yard. A small man, described as about "thirty inches tall," came out of the saucer but when Allen asked whether

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he was hurt he climbed back in and took off.

Morris K. Jessup, in THE EXPANDING CASE FOR THE UFO, mentions the 1950 report of a flying saucer wreck near Mexico City, the dead pilot described as twenty-three inches high. Several saucers are said to have been inspected by (anonymous) scientists, thirty-four corpses, measuring between thirty-six and forty inches in height, being found in three of these crashed UFO. All the bodies are described as "well formed," as were the dead men, less than four feet tall, according to British sources describing a similar wreck, described in Dorothy Kilgallen's famous 1955 report.

Way back in May of 1909, in the Caerphilly Mountains, in Wales, a man named Lithbridge saw a large "tube-shaped" object sitting on the grass beside the road. In it were two men wearing "heavy fur overcoats." When they saw Mr. Lithbridge, they spoke excitedly in a foreign language, and sailed away. Newspapermen visiting the place found trampled grass and a scattering of debris.

Little helmeted figures without apparent arms are reported in several French sightings in 1954. On September 26th, a Madame Leboeuf, in Chabeuil, saw one such man. She thought at first that it was some new type of scare-crow, for it looked as if it was wrapped in a cellophane bag. Suddenly "it" began to approach her and she fled in fright, hiding behind a hedge, with her head in her hands. A moment later she saw an object rise swiftly, neighbors finding a ten-foot circular impression in the ground in her garden where the object had apparently rested. The cornstalks had been flattened, and several branches of trees had been broken overhead.

The helmeted little men who embrace the startled people whom they meet have somewhat more aggressive counterparts, however. In the Cincinnati area there are the occasionally seen "strange little men about three feet tall," and in Hopkinsville there were the three-feet-tall green men, with hands like claws, understandably annoyed when the frightened Kentucky farmer shot at them.

In Venezuela, in November of 1954, there were a series of incidents involving aggressive beings, furry or hairy, three to four feet tall, with long arms and claw-like hands, enlarged heads with a pair of enormous eyes, and wearing what appeared to be something similar to a loin cloth. These beings would attack anyone stumbling upon them, the victims being hospitalized with lacerations and suffering from shock. In one case a meat delivery truck on their way to a sausage factory, found the way blocked by a luminous sphere, ten feet in diameter, hovering a few feet above the street. As the two men in the truck jumped out they found a man the size of a dwarf coming at them, a dwarf strong enough to knock one of them a distance of fifteen feet. Two other little men joined in the fray. Gonzales,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one of the truckmen, pulled a knife on the approaching glowing-eyed dwarf. To his surprise, the blade slid off as if he was striking metal. Minutes later the sphere shot off, the little men inside.

By way of contrast there is the little green man who approached the home of a man in Everittstown, New Jersey, only the other month. A luminous egg-shaped object, nine to twelve feet long, was hovering a few feet off the ground, in front of the barn, while the little man approached the house.

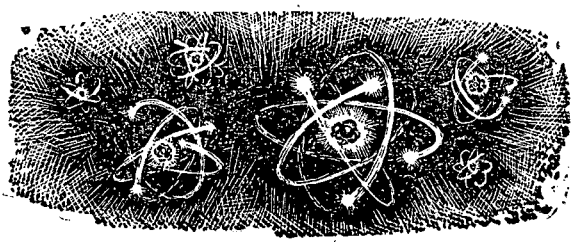
The little man is described as two and a half to three feet high, dressed in a green suit with shiny buttons, with a green hat like a tam and gloves with a shiny object at the tip of each glove. He had a putty-colored face, a nose and a chin, and large protuberant frog-like eyes. In a voice that seemed "sharp and scary" to the frightened man facing him, he apparently said, "We are peaceful people. We don't want no trouble. We just want your dog." (There is an interesting pattern, there, of the frequent interest of these little men in dogs.) The reply was a frightened and angry, "Get the hell out of here!", and "get" they did. . . .

Here, then, is a different and far less publicized aspect of the contact picture. In the above, and many other incidents, strange little men, varying from the grotesque to the "pretty," have had brief and generally abrupt contacts with our citizenry. These are no glamorous, soulful, golden-haired people, preaching the rather curious contactee gospel reported by some. These are strange and often "alien" beings, apparently frightening in their very difference, rejected ("Get the hell out of here!") and perhaps even described exaggeratedly by witnesses whose instinctive revulsion affected their reactions.

Who *are* these little men?

We still don't know, but it seems obvious that these little men—these "little green men"—do exist. . . .

The above is based on material appearing in CSI Newsletter *No. 10, December 15, 1957; C.R.I.F.O.* Orbit, *Sept. 2, 1955, and Oct. 7, 1955; "Saucer Landings and Little Men," an address in 1956 by Ted Bloecher, Research Director, Civilian Saucer Intelligence; and "The Expanding Case for the UFO," by M. K. Jessup (1957, Citadel Press).*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the beautiful things

by . . . Arthur Zirul

At the mention of the sacred Gods they bowed their heads in reverence before the names of those who'd made us think.

LAST spring season, just before the Forest Council was about to disband in search of mates, I introduced a Bill to provide funds for a sanctuary for Man. A place where men would be able to live unmolested, and where they would create beautiful things for us. I have become convinced that we Bears cannot make the beautiful things; we have no feeling for it. Only Man seems to have this divine ability. When I told the Elders of the Council of my thoughts they scoffed and asked what had made a Bruin of my rank even consider such fantastic ideas.

I told them of how I had captured a man last winter near the ruins of the Great City. I had kept him alive, over the objections of my hungry cubs, when I discovered that he could make the beautiful things. I told them of how my family had learned to appreciate the delicate art of my man and had gained great pleasure from it. I was certain that other Bears would also be benefited if they had the opportunity to obtain similar works of art.

The Elders said nothing until I showed them samples of my man's work. They then roared with displeasure and said that Bears had no

A roving Radar Tech with the Air Force during the War, Arthur Zirul would hop from one island to the other assuring pilots it was not smart to lighten their ships by dumping the radar. Later a cartoonist, a baby photographer, etc., etc., Zirul now owns and operates a small industrial model shop in N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

need for such frivolities. Bears had need only for the stout club and the sharp fang. The things my man had made, they said, were born of the same dark thoughts that had led to the destruction of Mankind by the Thunder Gods.

At the mention of the sacred Gods the Elders bowed their heads reverently. It is written, in the Holy Books found in the Great City, that the Thunder Gods destroyed the cities of men because of their sinful ways. They leveled their cities with the Fires That Burned Forever, the same fires which had given the Bears the ability to think, and to use their paws like hands. This was done so that we might inherit the Earth. The Elders believed that it was the God-given mission of the Bears to destroy the remnants of Mankind and *not* to perpetuate its follies. They could not support my proposal.

Their blind dogmatism, and their refusal to pursue my thoughts any further angered me to a point where I challenged the Council thusly: at the next session of the Council I would present much more conclusive proof that man can create beautiful, important, things for us. If, after due consideration, the Elders found my proof convincing then they must open a state sanctuary; otherwise, if they refused to give me even this opportunity to prove my theory, they must be prepared to meet my wrath in the mating arena.

The Elders of the Council sat in deep thought for a while, rubbing their backs on the thick trees that ringed the Council clearing. A Prince's challenge, such as mine, cannot be taken lightly. They asked me how I intended to obtain this conclusive proof I spoke of. I told them that I would open a sanctuary, at my own expense, where men would make the beautiful things for me. I was certain that many men working together, under my protection, could create much greater things than my lone slave is able to do. Things that would convince the Elders of Man's ability. The Elders muttered among themselves for some time but they finally agreed to my proposal; with the condition that they should not be expected to reimburse me for my experiments if my proposal was not adopted.

I agreed to their condition and proceeded to carry out my plans the very next day. I unearthed the greater part of my wealth and spent it wildly in a frenzy to have my project begun. First I bought an old den on the property of my neighbor. I ordered it cleared of its bones and refuse and be made ready for habitation. While the cave was being readied I set out to capture a group of humans to occupy it. I organized a hunting party. Beaters were sent out first; they flushed the humans from their holes in the ground and into the open. The men were fleet of foot and soon outran us but we were able to catch one female, too heavy with child to run. We used her as the bait. The beaters prodded her with sharp sticks to make her cry out. Humans are very curious by nature

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and after a while some of them returned to see what the noise was about. We captured six men this way quite easily and were forced to kill only one of them, a young one, who had thrown himself like a crazed dog at my head beater. I was sorry to have lost him but I received a good price for his carcass from the butcher.

I had the humans brought to the sanctuary where I managed to explain, using the clumsy pidgin that we speak to humans with, that I wanted them to create beautiful things for me. Things such as their ancestors had created, with skill and feeling, in the old days. Those beautiful things that, in cold materials, had expressed the flaming souls of their creators for all to see, and to admire, and to stand in awe of. . . . The Beautiful Things. I did not let them see samples of my man-slave's work as I did not wish them to blindly copy those things which the Council had not liked in the first; I urged them to use their God-gift to create new and better things.

At first the humans appeared to be frightened at my words. Then they were incredulous, finally they were overjoyed to discover that they were not going to be tortured or eaten but were, instead, to be given an opportunity to preserve themselves and their art under my protection. One of the men explained eagerly that he had been taught to make the beautiful things by his father, who in turn had learned it from his father, who had been a great artist in the days before the wars. I was delighted. The man claimed to be able to create things much more beautiful than anything I had ever seen. Foolishly, I accepted him at his word and put him in charge.

I ordered that the humans be supplied immediately with all the materials they requested, no matter what the cost. Soon heaps of materials began to be delivered to the den. Most of the things I could not understand the need for. There were fats and oils, color pigments dug from the river bank and squeezed from herbs, logs of wood, and pieces of the hard flint from the mountains. They had even asked for white cloth, but of course, that was unobtainable. When they had all their supplies they asked to be let alone, and be allowed to work without outside distractions. I agreed reluctantly, but I made them promise that they would work as quickly as possible as I was very impatient to prove my theory.

For weeks the men worked in silence, all through the hot, still summer and into the first days of fall. I began to fear that they would have nothing ready to show me before the first snows fell and the Council reconvened. I would not be able to feed them forever. My impatience made me suspect that they were malingering, trying to keep the soft berth I had given them as long as possible. When the first chill winds began to sweep the leaves from the trees, I sent word to the den that I would be kept waiting no longer. I insisted on seeing their creations immediately. They agreed to my de-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mands and I hurried to their cave.

My heart pounded fiercely as I approached the sanctuary. I envisioned a new world opening for my race. A world filled with the beautiful things that Man would create for us. As I entered the den, however, my breath caught in my throat. I could not believe my senses when I saw what the men had done. Those . . . those *thieves* had betrayed me! Their leader, the one who claimed to have had the art in him, stood in the center of the cave, his hands and arms were stained with color. He sneered at me in that simpering way men have of displaying their teeth as he showed me what they had been doing for the past months, at my expense.

The walls were covered with ridiculous scribblings that looked like the outlines of men and bears when seen against the moon and were smeared over with oily colors. They showed me bits of wood that had been hacked with the flint tools they had made so that they looked like the shapes of men and bears, but smaller. They showed me scribblings they had drawn on the inside of sheets of bark. Their leader explained that it was called writing and that it would be very helpful to my people.

I bristled with anger. How could I have made such a disastrous mistake as to have been taken in by that band of cheap charlatans?

"What have you done?" I roared. "What is all this . . . this dung? Where are all the beautiful things you promised me?"

"B-but," the leader whined, his eyes wide as he held up a piece of the carved wood. "Here they are. We created them for you as our ancestors created them for themselves."

"Leech!" I screamed. "You have the gall to call these knots beautiful?" I flung the statue from me so that it smashed against the wall. I snatched the latest creation of my man-slave from my belt. "Here!" I roared, holding it aloft, "Here is what I want!"

I brought the sharp, singing edge down swiftly into the throat of the trembling fool.

"This is a beautiful thing!" I bellowed in a voice that shook the cave as I flung the dripping dagger into the center of the room.

The firelight glinted in flashes of beautiful fire from the polished steel blade of the dagger and from its keen, hair-line edge. We Bears simply do not have the ability to match such exquisite workmanship in the clumsy stone things we make.

That is why I plead not to exterminate the few men left in the world. If there was an error in my plan it lay only in incorrect experimentation. I claim what every true scientist knows. One incorrect experiment does not rule out an entire hypothesis. My theory is sound and must not be disregarded. We must seek out those men who can make the beautiful things and we must conserve them and train them to produce those things for us. Things like those lovely, shining knives that are so light to carry and kill so easily—or perhaps something even better.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yes! Take "SATELLITE" for Only 10¢

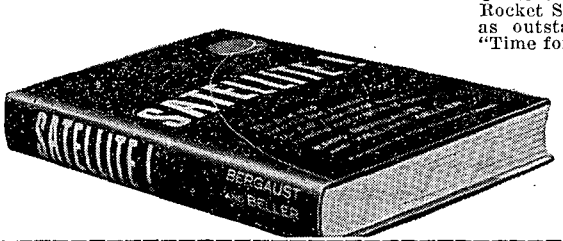
with membership

(Value $3.95 in publisher's edition)

—Continued from Back Cover

the first FACTUAL report by two top experts on the most remarkable achievement of modern science. "SATELLITE!" tells the TRUE, scientific story of this country's first steps into space — describes, in non-technical language, what has taken place above us that will bring about the greatest changes in the history of the world. Tells how satellites work. Describes U. S. and Soviet satellites. Discusses the possibility of MANNED flights to the moon.

This book of astounding FACTS is more fascinating than the most thrilling science fiction. You'll share the thrills of man's most daring adventure. Examine for the first time secret scientific experiments that are paving the way for interplanetary travel. Explore the dark regions of space. The wealth of information revealed here for the first time will amaze you!



Why We Make This Offer

Why do we offer you this book for 10¢? Simply to demonstrate the many advantages of membership in the Science Fiction Book Club. This Club brings members not only the outstanding new masterpieces of imaginative writing, but also the best scientific books of special interest to science fiction fans. For example, Club selections have included such exciting non-fiction books as "The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects." "The Viking Rocket Story" and "Exploring Mars," as well as outstanding new fiction novels such as "Time for the Stars," "The Isotope Man," and "The Naked Sun." As a member you are offered these fine books for only $1.00 each, though the publishers' prices range up to $4.00. Why not join now, while you can get this thrilling new volume for only ten cents? **So mail the coupon NOW, *with only 10¢ to:***

SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB
Dept. FU-5, Garden City, N. Y.

MAIL COUPON WITH ONLY 10¢

Simply mail the coupon with only a dime. SATELLITE will be sent to you at once, together with the current selection, for which you will be billed only $1, plus a few cents shipping charges. Every month you will be offered the cream of the new $2.50 to $4.00 science fiction and non-fiction science books for only $1.00 each. You are not obliged to take a book each month. You may accept as few as four a year and still retain all the privileges of membership. But this offer may be withdrawn at any time.

SCIENCE-FICTION BOOK CLUB CS
Dept. FU-5, Garden City, N. Y.

I enclose only 10¢ for which please rush my copy of "SATELLITE!," *together with the current selection of the Club for which you may bill* me only $1. plus a few cents shipping, and enroll me as a member. Every month send the Club's free bulletin, describing coming selections. For each book I accept, I will pay only $1.00, plus shipping. I need take only 4 books during each year I am a member and may resign at any time thereafter.

NO-RISK GUARANTEE: If not delighted with the books, I may *return* them in 7 days, pay nothing, and membership will be cancelled.

Name_____ (Please Print Clearly)

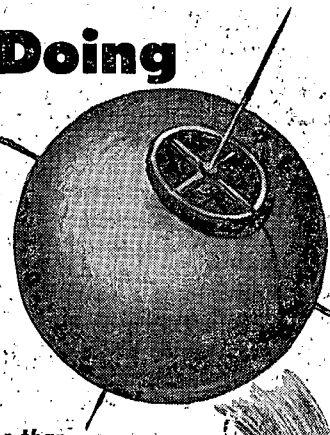
Address_____

City_____ Zone_____ State_____

SAME OFFER TO RESIDENTS OF CANADA. Address Science-Fiction Club, 105 Bond Street, Toronto 2, Ont. (Offer Good only in Continental U. S. and Canada.) S-54

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At Last— The Inside Story of What the U.S. is Doing To Launch Our Answer To SPUTNIK



"SATELLITE!" gives you the authoritative, stranger-than-fiction report of this country's RACE INTO SPACE

HERE'S an offer just as sensational as today's headlines. For a mere 10¢ (and membership in this excitement-packed book club) you can have "SATELLITE!"—the fascinating behind-the-scenes book on U. S. plans to launch MAN-MADE MOONS.

You've read the headlines. You've heard the astounded reaction of the world to news that Russia has rocketed the first satellites into space. What does it all mean? When does the U.S. plan to launch our first satellite? How will the "Satellite Age," affect our lives? What will the satellites teach us about interplanetary travel? Does the U. S. plan a *manned* rocket trip to the moon?

A Brand-New Revision Still on the Presses!
This amazing book is a brand-new revision—still on the presses! Reveals sensational details about Russia's "Sputnik," U. S. satellites soon to be launched — the whole story of the fantastic race into space brought *completely up to the minute!*

FACTUAL Answers Revealed By Top Experts

Now you can get the answers to these vital questions in "SATELLITE!"—

—Continued on other side

YOURS for Only 10¢ WITH MEMBERSHIP

"SATELLITE!"

The Amazing Factual Story of Our "Man-Made Moons"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED